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## LESS GARGANTUAN ?

Many indignant letters have come to this office from readers who say the magazine is too big in format. "Your damnable sheet is simply too unwieldy for subway reading." "It cannot be stuck into one's hip pocket for a canoe trip." "It is too obvious; its size is an advertisement to the world that one has taken to literary Bolshevism." These are some of the wails.

What do other readers think? We are seriously considering cutting our size to some less Gargantuan shape. The artists like the meadow-like spread of white space in which to cavort, but their case is weak as compared to the subway riders. Let's hear more on this.

\* \* \*

It would be impossible to print all the letters that have come regarding the magazine. They arrive from Peking, Peoria, Leningrad, Melbourne, Budapest, San Francisco, Mobile, Scranton, Prague and a thousand other places where human beings work and think and rebel. We have covered an amazing amount of territory for a magazine which has no money for advertising or promotion work. And the summary of the letters is this: The NEW MASSES, in six months, has built for itself a host of friends who love it and hate it quite sincerely. There is little indifference.

The magazine is going to be a lot better. It is going to furnish fresh surprises as more and more of the youth of America learn it is their organ.

Our weak point, however, is the fact that too few of our friends have the faith in us to invest in a two-dollar subscription. We are selling too many copies on the newsstands, and there is no profit in this. A magazine lives on advertisements and subscriptions.

If you want the NEW MASSES to continue, you must sit down at once and subscribe. You must get your friends to subscribe. You are a piker if you do less for the magazine. No one is making money out of this magazine, and no one is ever going to. It is as much your magazine as it is that of the artists and writers who create it. If you want it to live—subscribe. If you don't want us, here's hoping you get a Mussolini in America.

\* \* \*

THE POST OFFICE has finally given us our second class mailing privilege. In effect, this means we are no longer obscene. We are not grateful for this belated recognition of our purity. We knew we were pure all along—though a little off-color as to capitalism. And we still believe some anonymous official in the post office is not the proper person to pass on all the new thinking in art, science, politics and sex in this country. If we must have a censor, let him come out in the open where we can see him. No more of this cheap sabotage, this petty persecution in the manner of the mosquito or Methodist. But maybe America is too addicted to hypocrisy for anything as frank as a censor. After all, the frame-up is America's contribution to international statecraft. Mooney, Sacco and Vanzetti, Joe Hill—and many others have suffered at the hands of Deacon Sam, the virtuous murderer.



DRAWING BY XAVIER GUERRERO

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!  
A MEXICAN LABOR POSTER

# NEW MASSES

VOLUME 1

OCTOBER, 1926

NUMBER 6

Single copy, 25 cents

Subscription \$2.00 a year in United States and Colonies, Canada and Mexico. Foreign \$2.50.

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Published monthly by NEW MASSES, INC. Office of Publication, 39 West Eighth Street, New York; Michael Gold, President; Egmont Arens, Vice-President; Ruth Stout, Secretary; James Rorty, Treasurer.

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Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Subscribers are notified that no change of address can be effected in less than a month.

Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped and addressed return envelope.



## IN THIS ISSUE

## THE WRITERS

Edmund Wilson is a contributing editor of the *New Republic*.

Joseph Freeman, one of the editors of the NEW MASSES, is now visiting Soviet Russia.

Yossef Gaer is a young novelist and story writer whose work is shortly to appear under the imprint of Frank-Maurice.

Gene Cohn is a columnist and special writer for the Newspaper Enterprise Association.

Jacques LeClerq, formerly an instructor at the University of California, is now living in New York.

Ewald Sandner is an Illinois miner, until recently a student at the Brookwood Labor College.

Don Ryan was at one time a movie critic and special writer for the Los Angeles Daily Record.

Margaret S. Ernst writes for the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* and is chairman of the editorial committee of the Women's City Club of New York.

Ann Washington Craton is a direct descendant of the Father of His Country and was for a number of years an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Slim Martin, a structural iron worker, is the author of *It's a Hell of a Game*, which appeared in the July issue of the NEW MASSES.

Mary Heaton Vorse edited the *Passaic Strike Bulletin*. She is now working on a new novel.

M. H. Hedges, editor of the official organ of the Electrical Workers' Union, is the author of several labor novels.

E. Merrill Root has contributed verse and criticism to *The Liberator*, *The Measure* and other magazines.

Hyperion Le Bresco is the pen name of a newspaperman living in New York.

The parables in this issue by Charles Garland, who has devoted his inherited wealth almost entirely to the service of the radical movement, are his first published work.

V. F. Calverton is editor of the *Modern Quarterly*. His second book, *Sex Expression in Literature*, is being published by Boni and Liveright.

Ernest Walsh is one of the editors of *This Quarter*.

## THE ARTISTS

Ernest Zillak presents in this issue his first published work.

A. Walkowitz has recently completed a set of mural decorations for the country home of A. Kaplan.

Ilonka Karasz, one of the founders of the M. A. C. (Modern Art Collection) is now in France.

Hans Stengel is a staff artist of the *Herald-Tribune*.

Franz Heinz is a young German radical now living in America.





DRAWING BY HUGO GELLERT

## ALBERT WEISBORD

THE A. F. OF L. DISAPPROVES OF HIM. HE IS SAID TO BE A COMMUNIST. HE ORGANIZED THE HUNGRY. LEADERLESS. PASSAIC MASSES FOR WHOM THE A. F. OF L. HAD DONE NOTHING. IF THIS IS COMMUNISM, LET'S HAVE MORE OF IT IN AMERICA!





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# AMERICA NEEDS A CRITIC

A REVIEW — By MICHAEL GOLD

## 1. SOVIET RUSSIA

**M**OST of the younger writers and artists turn to France for that foreign cross-fertilization that has always been biologically necessary for a healthy national culture.

But intellectual France has ended in Dada. Young America can learn nothing from the 200-year old boulevardiers, except to sit at sidewalk cafés and sip aperitifs, literarily.

All that is left now in France is a café culture, and the worker's movement.

We who turn to Soviet Russia for help in self-understanding are luckier. There we find a new dynamism akin to our own American spirit. There we find titan artists who are grappling with the Machine Age. There we find a world seething with experiment, a huge fascinating art laboratory. Russia is self-conscious about the machine age, but we are not; and that is what we can learn of them.

Read a book like Huntley Carter's "The New Theatre in Soviet Russia," and if you are a playwright, you will burn to take the first boat for Moscow.

Read Trotzky's "Literature and Revolution,"\* and if you are a minor poet, you will be shamed out of your morbidity, your introspection, your self-pitying, God-seeking American confusion, and rise to the trumpet blast like a soldier of art.

Yes, art is not the boudoir sport of diletantes in Soviet Russia, but a heroic spirit that moves in the streets and public squares, that marches in the Red Army, lives with the peasants, works side by side with the factory workers, performs mighty social tasks.

Art is no longer snobbish or cowardly. It teaches peasants to use tractors, gives lyrics to young soldiers, designs textiles for factory-women's dresses, writes burlesque for factory theatres, does a hundred other useful tasks. Art is necessary as bread. No one feels apologetic about Art in Russia. Carl Sandburg sells some two thousand copies of his poems here; but Mayakovsky, a Futurist writing the most modern and complex rhythms, sells three million books in Soviet Russia.

Art, that was once the polite butler of the bored and esthetic, has become the heroic and fascinating comrade of all humanity. This is a better role for her, we think. She was meant for this from the beginning.

## 2. DEATH OF ROCOCO

Before the French Revolution, the corrupt court intellectuals had created the style of the Rococo. The decadence of the time was expressed in those delicate and erotic curves, in all that frivolous and futile ornamentation. But the Revolution of the middle class could not use this feudal trash, and swept it away.

David and other painters began the great vigorous tradition of French painting, which stems not from Watteau

and the Rococo, but from the Revolution.

Diderot brought literature back to the "ancient" heroism and simplicity. He said that art must have the purpose of glorifying fine deeds, of branding vice, and inspiring tyrants with fear. He also advised dramatists to "get close to real life"; he himself wrote plays that blazed the trail ending in Ibsen and Shaw.

And in England, the French Revolution inspired the young emerging writers to revolt. Wordsworth was a visitor to revolutionary France, and came back determined to restore the common word and the common man's emotions to the sickly court poetry of the time.

Young Shelley was touched off by the Revolution like a glorious red rocket. Blake poured forth mystic dithyrambs of revolution, and was arrested and tried for sedition for wearing a red liberty-cap in the street, and saying in public he wished the Revolution would come to England, to purge that gross land. Burns wrote revolutionary songs, and was proud to be a peasant, Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt wrote revolutionary criticism, Byron flamed and sneered at the feudal order, and donned the sword for red republicanism.

The French Revolution ushered in a whole new style in English literature. The Revolution was not merely "politics," which is how our own literary men are fond of dismissing the Russian Revolution. It was a revolution in culture, too, and inevitably laid its hand on literature.

The revolution of the workers today will inevitably lay its hand on our own culture, and make it over anew. How could it be otherwise? In Soviet Russia the metamorphosis is already taking place.

## 3. TROTZKY

Trotzky's book on literature is an amazing performance. This man is almost as universal as Leonardo da Vinci. The Revolution shares with the Renaissance the fact that men have again become versatile. They have taken all knowledge for their province, because all knowledge is a necessary tool to the Revolution. Astronomers direct vast industries in Soviet Russia, stage directors experiment in biology, economists write plays, poets invent machinery — and Trotzky ranges as far and deep as his comrades.

Trotzky was the most single-minded of pacifists, but made himself the best general and military tactician in Europe. He is a great financial expert. He is now chief organizer of the reconstructed Russian industry. He helps direct the diplomacy. He reads and writes five or six languages, and knows the intimate affairs of every country in the world. Occupying a group of positions that would correspond to several cabinet offices in this country, combined with the presidency of the steel trust, and rubber, oil, and textile industries, this man finds time to turn out at least two important books

a year, some of which serve for textbooks in economics and history, besides scores of articles on industry, international politics, the Einstein theory, finance, Freud, the American agrarian situation, Chinese history and labor movements, poetry, the atom, the stage — every phase of intelligence that the Revolution must use or understand.

His Literature and Revolution is an examination of Russian literature, and what happened to it after the cannons of the Revolution had battered down the blood-stained Rococo style of the Czar.

Trotzky discusses hundreds of poets, novelists and dramatists intimately. He analyzes scores of young writers whose work has not yet even been collected in books. He seems to know what the obscurest 16-year old factory girl poet in Kazan has been producing recently. He quotes from the manifestoes of the young insolent schools of bardlings that push to life like mushrooms in present Russia. The literary air there is charged with healthy combat, and he knows familiarly the issues raised by all the schools.

Where has he found the time for this vast and loving research? This is not a matter of mere energy—Roosevelt was energetic, and Mussolini's sole stock in trade is energy. Trotzky loathes the false theatricalism of these cheap actors on the stage of history; his style has the energy, not of a blustering he-man, but of a great, serene self-restrained general on a battlefield. No, it is not energy alone; energy alone creates an American Rotarian; but it is the spirit of the Revolution that works and ferments in Trotzky, as it once fermented in Danton, Voltaire, Shelley, Blake, Walt Whitman, and John Brown.

Art is not a plaything, it is an organic part of the Revolution, and therefore wins his concentration as intensely as the defense of Petrograd against the British invaders. It is necessary as bread.

## 4. THE MARXIAN METHOD

Trotzky, in every line of his book, shows that he loves literature with a deep and permanent passion. He understands its own mysterious and intuitive laws, and can become intoxicated by a magic phrase like any young defenseless poet. His is not the mechanical knowledge of the pedant. And he writes as well as Mencken, if with more science. And science is what American criticism needs most of all.

In America subjective criticism prevails almost entirely. It is worthless to the writer; it cannot help him understand himself, or his relationship to his age. At best, it is a pat on the shoulder, a prettily strung bouquet of appreciation; at worst, a kick in the rear. But Trotzky's criticism is not spun out of his inner consciousness as are the critiques of Mencken or of Waldo Frank. Trotzky comes to literature, as to other social phenomena, with the scientific tools of the Marxian methodology. He

gives us, what no American critic has yet fully given us, a sense of the social changes which precede each new school of art, and which determine the individual psychology of the artist, however "free" he thinks he is.

The writer and artist of to-day has become a specialist. He thinks of himself merely as a craftsman, and is proud to confess that he is ignorant of history, economics, and science. This lack of universal culture has left him with the naïve egotism of a child. The average artist still believes that he is child of some immaculate conception, his umbilical cord attached to Eternity though the rest of humanity is bound to Time.

Wherever the boudoir bards and minor Oscar Wildes congregate one can hear those awful, awful clichés of the esthetic bores: Art is Eternal. Art is never useful. Art has nothing to do with propaganda. Art is above the battle. Art is Free, etc., etc.

But the Marxians, for at least fifty years, have been grubbing and burrowing among the economic roots of the shining rose-bush of art, and have found that healthy real roots do exist there, as in all other things that live. This discovery distresses artists; as the discovery that man was descended from monkeys and not angels once distressed the pious and wishful. But we need not fear these discoveries; every such truth adds a cubit to Man's heroic mind; leads to further conquest of life and eternity; makes man a master, not a slave of life. The discovery of the law of Evolution, that we did not live in a purely accidental world, but that cause and effect penetrate each part of the universe, has not degraded us, but has advanced the human mind millenniums further on the climb upward from the monkey. Marx's discovery of the mutability and class-roots of all cultures, will prove as fruitful as Darwin's discovery to culture, for it will eventually lead us to the really free, classless, human, social art of the future. To more Shakespeares and Goethes, and fewer Oscar Wildes and Carl Van Vechtens! To art still undreamed of, in its glory and vastness. To new strong styles and schools, to mass-wonders! Criticism like Trotzky's is creative criticism—the American brand is only conversation.

## 5. THE REVOLUTION AS TOUCHSTONE

After a year of introspection in a monk's cell, one would have known as little of oneself as at the beginning. One would have only rotted. But a year of active deeds, of experiments in art and life, would bring self-knowledge and discipline. Only action can test us.

In ordinary times writers are never tested by events. They live in a kind of parliamentary peace, and nurse, like liberals, all manner of delusions. It is when a war or revolution occurs that their social roots are most clearly exposed, even to themselves.

The Russian Revolution was the

\* Literature and Revolution, by Leon Trotzky, International Publishers, N. Y., \$2.50.



great touchstone to Russian culture. Trotsky shows how those superior schools of pure poets, the Parnassians, Symbolists and others, flocked to the White Armies or found themselves suddenly not above the battle, but on the general staff of Polish militarists in invading Russia.

Many of them became emigrés in Paris, "thought they would cheat history," and wound up in futility, like so many of our American literary emigrés.

The older writers who remained in Russia, because of their strong class roots, proved almost as futile as the emigrés in the face of the Revolution. They could not accept the present. They tried to cheat time, and remain in the past.

"The gem of this literature of discarded thoughts and feelings is the fat, well-meaning Almanac Streletz," says Trotsky, "where poems, articles and letters by Solugub, Rozanov, Belenson, Kusmin, Hollerbakh, and others, are printed and to the quantity of three hundred numbered copies. A novel of Roman life, letters about the erotic cult of the bull Apis, an article about St. Sophia, the Earthly and Heavenly; three hundred numbered copies—what hopelessness, what desolation! It were better to curse and rage! That, at least, would resemble life."

This, in the face of the greatest event in world history. But some of our American writers do the same thing in the face of an event almost as great—the rise of industrial America, which they fear and understand as little as the elder pious poets understood the new Russia.

The lyrical poets of mystic feelings have deemed themselves most especially above the social battle. But the best representative of the school in Russia, Zinaida Hippus, began writing lines like this, after the Revolution.

"And swiftly you will be driven to the old stable with a club,  
O people, disrespectful of holy things."

Trotsky nails her in a paragraph:

"Only yesterday she was a Petrograd lady, languid, decorated with talents, liberal, modern. Suddenly today, this lady, so full of her own subtleties, sees the black outrageous ingratitude on the part of the mob in hobnailed boots, and offended in her social holy of holies, transforms her impotent rage into a shrill womanish squeak, (in iambics.) Immediately she showed the real property-owning witch under her decadent mystic-erotic Christian covering."

Other writers accepted the Revolution half-heartedly. But it was the gesture of death; their work never came to flower, because they ceased being creators of life, they lived on the left-overs of a culture created by blood of the past. "I have even found a place for myself in all this; a poet observer and a bourgeois saving my life from death," one of the most gifted wrote with tender irony about himself.

Trotsky goes through all the schools; touches the falsities, the mere veneer of art that coated all of these Parnassians, Symbolists, Acmeists, and others who lived only for art, but who became transformed into hysterical enemies of the working-class as soon as they

came into contact with its power.

It is a masterly summary of Russian literary history for the past ten years. There have always been great writers in Russia, and each of them has some prototype in America. It is strange and amusing to meet all the familiar slogans and evasions of American literary specialists in Trotsky's pages. They are priests of the esthetic God, they are servants of a divine classless mystery, and then suddenly the worker confronts them, a giant problem against the sky, and they flock to the White Army, where their real roots had always been. This happened in England, also, during the general strike. It will happen here.

#### 6. THE NEW AGE

But it is not only by the political upheaval that Trotsky tests these writers. The bloody events of Revolution are only as important as the blood and pain in which a child is born. After that hour of primitive violence passes, the mother begins rearing the child. It is for this child that the pain was

suffered—he is the Revolution, not the pain and blood.

The real Revolution has changed the face of Russia. It has destroyed the myth of the Slavic "soul," that potent myth that Sherwood Anderson and other belated Dostoieskians in this country still cherish. The dark inquisitorial power of the Church, that kept the peasants in dirt, savagery and holiness, has been destroyed. Machinery is being introduced, talked, hoped for, worshipped, debated like the social question it really is. An illiterate nation is beginning to read ferociously; the printing industry is almost first in size in modern industrial Russia. The Bolsheviks have been a huge party of teachers, and what they are teaching Russia is modernism, the Machine Age.

All the young writers have been influenced by the powerful Futurist school, which before the war had so heroically claimed the Machine Age for art. The Futurists were the readiest to accept the Revolution, and their writers and artists are national figures

now in Soviet Russia. Every newspaper cartoon, every book cover decoration, every new building, statue, monument, factory, textile design, moving picture, poem story and symphony, has been affected by Futurist theory and practise. This is one of the enormous surprises and revelations that come to the writer who visits Russia to-day.

Trotsky analyzes the Futurist school, and comes to the conclusion that while it was born in bourgeois Bohemianism, as a revolt against Philistinism, and is therefore not a true revolutionary product, it still has the proud distinction of being the bridge between the old culture and the new.

Then he goes into a profound discussion of proletarian art, advancing the thesis that the term is a misnomer. He argues that the proletariat is but a transitory class in history, and that its object is not to perpetuate itself as a class, as was the object of the bourgeoisie, but to wipe out all classes. The bourgeoisie had a long period in which to create its art, some two hundred years. But the proletarian dictatorship will only be necessary for a few decades, when it will establish the classless society, and therefore the classless human art of the future.

I do not agree with this. Even if for only fifty years the proletariat remains in subjection to capitalist society, will there not be some art growing out of this mass of intense, tragic, active human beings? Will they not sing, and need cartoons, plays, novels, like other human beings? Are they not studying, groping, reaching out hungrily for culture? It is not a matter of theory; it is a fact that a proletarian style is emerging in art. It will be as transitory as other styles; but it will have its day.

I have not done justice to Trotsky's book or its subject in this article. His approach and material are so new to American readers that one would have to write the history of the Revolution, give an account of Marxism, examine all the theories of esthetics, and analyze a hundred American writers, to demonstrate the validity of the method, or even to begin to create a common ground for discussion. America is still provincial. American writers still go to the author of *Mlle. de Maupin* for their theories of art. American writers still try to be Dostoieffskis in a skyscraper America. American writers still go on creating a literature of social protest, while denying the social criticism of literature. America still needs its great literary critic.

#### 7. SEND US A CRITIC

Mencken is not that critic. He has no science—is a believer in the accidental theory of literature, as in life. He is one of the salon-singers celebrating the "freedom" of the artist, but is himself the best example of the fallacy of that dogma. For his popularity with the middle-class rests on the fact that he has given them a class philosophy exactly suited to their needs of the hour. He is popular, not for esthetic reasons, but because he has expressed the philosophy of our *nouveaux riches*. Upton Sinclair is popular in Russia for similar reasons; he expresses the proletariat.

Mencken has re-discovered Nero's



DRAWING BY ERNEST ZILLIAK

#### TENEMENT HOLIDAY





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## TENEMENT HOLIDAY





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## TENEMENT HOLIDAY





DRAWING BY A. WALKOWITZ

## THE BATHERS

philosophy of feasting and futility. Futitarianism is an easy way of evading one's social ideals. An idealist is not a good money-maker, and if he is to get on the band-wagon, to share some of the immense boodle that is now circulating so freely here, he must cast overboard all his ideals. This renegadism Mencken has made seem the jolliest and most sophisticated of gestures.

Waldo Frank is not the critic. He has a dark huge Whitman-like emotion about America, but he writes for an audience of medieval saints, and not for New York. Mystics cannot run locomotives, or explain the Machine Age to us.

Van Wyck Brooks started out to be that critic. His was a large sane, social mind, attracted only by the major movements of humanity. But he is lost up the blind alley of Freud, where each individual artist is explained like a miracle, by his individual neuroses and complexes, and not by the social environment that created those complexes.

Floyd Dell had all the equipment for that critic, but broke down in purpose. Max Eastman was the finest candidate, a true artist and scientist, but the victim of an anomaly. He was a poet with old-fashioned tendencies, and so faced backwards. He was at heart an aristocrat, an individualist; he could never quite consent to be a part of that collectivist organization he pleaded for. Therefore, while he demonstrated, in some of the most beautiful prose of our day, the Marxian roots of religion, politics, sex, and other social phenomena, in art he stood side by side with the accidentalists.

Among the younger men: Joseph Krutch has a sound equipment but is heading up Van Wyck Brook's alley; Edmund Wilson is a force, but is bogged in formalism, and never drives clean to the great mark; V. F. Calverton has a wide, scholarly knowledge of

the new criticism, but is undeveloped in esthetic insight or emotion. Joseph Freeman is equipped, but writes too infrequently to be felt.

Randolph Bourne might have grown

into the critic we need. He knew how great mass changes create the new artists, the new thoughts. He studied the international working-class movement. He was undaunted in the

storms of history, and accepted the fact that capitalism must change. In his mind, the world was one—and he examined all the political and economic facts, along with every other fact in a period, when he discussed literature.

Never did he lose, as Van Wyck Brooks has written, "the sense of the new socialized world groping its way upward. He was a wanderer, the child of some nation yet unborn, smitten with an unappeasable nostalgia for the Beloved Community on the far side of socialism." But Bourne died of loneliness during the war, which he fought. And no one has taken his place.

### 8. SEND US A CRITIC

O Life, send America a great literary critic. The generation of writers is going to seed again. Some of them started well, but are beginning to live fat and high, and have forgotten the ardors of their generous youth. This generation of writers is corrupted by all the money floating around everywhere. It is unfashionable to believe in human progress any longer. It is unfashionable to work for a better world. It is unfashionable and unsophisticated to follow in the footsteps of Tolstoi, of Dickens, Shelley, Blake, Burns, Whitman, Trotzky. Send us a critic. Send a giant who can shame our writers back to their task of civilizing America. Send a soldier who has studied history. Send a strong poet who loves the masses, and their future. Send someone who doesn't give a damn about money. Send one who is not a pompous liberal, but a man of the street. Send no mystics—they give us Americans the willies. Send no coward. Send no pedant. Send us a man fit to stand up to skyscrapers. A man of art who can match the purposeful deeds of Henry Ford. Send us a joker in overalls. Send no saint. Send an artist. Send a scientist. Send a Bolshevik. Send a man.

## REPRESENTATIVE AMERICANS

(At the Night-Club)

I see them still as there a year ago  
Among the potted trees,  
In that luxurious rose-lurid glow:  
He blank and ill-at-ease,  
Having sought her table but now, being come,  
Sawing at waffles (which she did not share),  
So solemn, so alone, so dull, so dumb,  
With such an iron air  
As freezes strangers in a foreign land,  
Whose guile they fear, whose speech they do not understand.

—See, there, I thought, the failure of my race!—  
Such gracelessness as brings him to this pass.

So he, the scrupulous, the chaste, the great,  
Blower of prose to perfect forms of glass  
That elegantly bottle human fate,  
Grown old, confessed a soul dry-rotted with regret,  
Having ever vainly fingered ladies' lace  
But never slept with Lison nor Lisette<sup>1</sup>.

So he who would have mollified mankind  
And quelled their brawling came at last to find,  
Meeting them with that square unsmiling chin,  
Remote suspicious eye,  
That he could neither bully, trick, nor win  
The old whores at Versailles<sup>2</sup>.

—While she, some farm-girl, clumsy with the cows  
But clever with her swains—  
Some wildest daughter of a docile house,  
Some sigher after trains;  
She with her brown eyes and her brassy hair,  
Her gaze not yet quite public to the trade;  
She, with that bold, abashed, rebellious stare,  
Like him sat straining, silent and afraid.

<sup>1</sup>The author of the Portrait of a Lady and The Ambassadors.

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Edmund Wilson





DRAWING BY A. WALKOWITZ

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Edmund Wilson



# POEMS FROM SOVIET RUSSIA

By JOSEPH FREEMAN

## HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

In houses people live and laugh and cry—  
And merchants walk the world to sell and buy;  
The merchant buys and sells each lovely thing,  
And ho, my friend, the merchant is our king!  
Then knock him down, and rolling in the gutter  
Let him compute the price of bread and butter.  
While down the Avenue we'll damn all wrongs,  
Shout merry tales and whistle merrier songs.  
Damn it! forget your job, forget trade orders—  
The skies have stars; the town, thank heaven, has borders;  
The fields are wide for any man to range;  
The seas are older than the Stock Exchange!  
And better worlds than ever a merchant made  
Shall spring to life behind the barricade.

*On the Volga River.*

## DEATH OF A REVOLUTIONIST

F. E. Djerdjinsky

Time shall forget the monstrous nightmare  
of czars landlords bankers priests  
Time shall remember our time of heroes  
scouring tyrannys rubbish off the earth

not one, not ten—millions struck for freedom  
the world heaved with masses breaking free  
resolute the advance guard marched before them  
the iron-hearted leaders showed the way

these seeing mankind going mad, cried out  
blew the sirens, knocked on the factory doors  
(Earth, take this comrade dearly to your bosom  
he was of those who saw, labored, fought)

workers strict battalions, marching,  
beat the streets of cities like deep drums  
the dark-faced peasants' roar rocked the meadows  
saluting the sunrise of the new-born day

nine years loom like nine black tombstones  
over the tyrants graves  
nine years gleam like nine steel gateways  
swinging open to the workers world

this was not done with white gloves, this  
was not done with prayers and invitations  
(Earth, take this comrade dearly to your bosom  
he was of those who saw, labored, fought)

workers and soldiers, hold heads high at his grave  
watching the outlines of the world he dreamed of  
he died with the battle raging: bury him slowly  
keep rifles clean: the last shots must be fired.

*Moscow.*

## PORTRAIT OF A GERMAN COMRADE

moscows midnight  
painting the window blue  
exhibits the independents show  
of gilded academic domes outside  
piercing the sky with spires  
looming behind  
picassos beer hall  
yellow and green across the street

the waiter shoves the bank clerk  
on the droszhky

she serves us tea at home  
around the table  
with the shaded lamp  
shining in the darkness of her room  
as shines a good deed etc  
this delicate touch  
expropriated from the worlds bohemia

lenins wise face  
smiles on the wall behind her head  
wonderful clever eyes  
eight inches from his beard  
a postcard stalin  
covers rykovs nose

hydroelectric stations  
slaughtered midnights magic  
no one remembers nightingales  
buy roses at the corner  
the english comrade  
from hampstead heath  
having once read this fellow keats  
tells how the boys  
walloped during the general strike  
the cops in sheffield



DRAWING BY WANDA GÁG

she lays out ham and sausage  
cuts bread like a man  
with thumb and penknife  
pours tea quickly  
statistically cursing ultra lefts  
brunhilde playing housewife  
—men do not take to me as men  
she lights a cigarette  
scorning to explain  
digresses to the year  
she learned to read her Marx in english  
in a canadian jail  
the time in dresden  
the Party saw the eyes of victory  
—we should have fired  
we had no iron leaders

o the years the years  
the hundred miles an hour years

at twenty when the war was young  
she wrote three chapters of a novel  
took courses in aesthetics  
—now is no time for fooling  
next year  
back to germany  
dieses mal müssen wir gewinnen

—you are young she says pouring tea  
i do not measure you by calendars  
learn to be critical  
conserve hit hard  
behind her wisdom  
lurks a deeper wisdom  
how should she say  
be strong like me  
choose  
eliminate  
march straight as heroes do

she  
never kneeling at his shrine  
sees what is great in lenin and in man  
measures this age  
with the vast gauges of her nature  
pouring tea quickly  
in moscows midnight blue  
quoting faust  
kidding the english comrade  
from hampstead heath

*Moscow.*

## PRINCE JERNIKIDZE

Prince Jernikidze wears his boots  
above his knees: his black mustache  
curls like the kaisers: when he shoots,  
friend and foe turn white as ash.

The movements of his hands are svelt  
Ivory bullets grace his chest.  
The studded poignard at his belt  
dangles down his thighs: the best

dancers in Tiflis envy his  
light lesinka's steady whirl.  
He bends his close-cropped head to kiss  
the finger-tips of every girl.

Over the shashleek and the wine,  
his deep and passionate baritone  
directs the singing down the line,  
and none may drain his glass alone.

When morning breaks into his room,  
he dons his long Caucasian coat;  
marches to the Sovnarkom,  
knocks on the door and clears his throat;

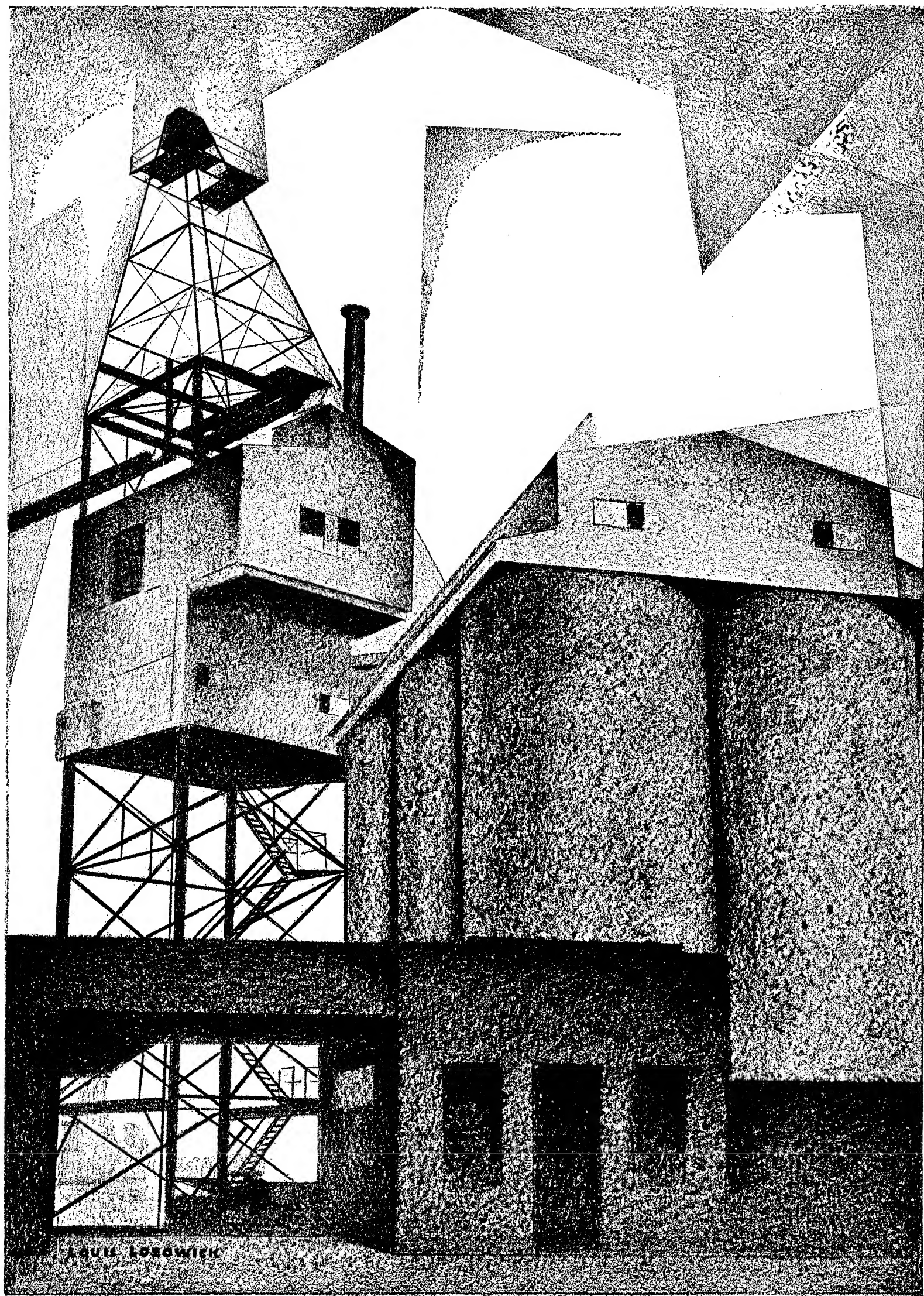
opens the ledger with his hand,  
bows to the commissars who pass,  
calls the janitor comrade—and  
keeps accounts for the working class.

*Batoum.*

## TIFLIS

Here, from the distant shores of Greece,  
Jason sought the Golden Fleece;  
These hills heard Rustavelli's voice,  
And saw Tamara's love-lit eyes;  
The Persian elephant-riders came  
And left their mark in blood and flame;  
Turkish scimitars were gory,  
For rich lands, horses, Allah's glory;  
Here Russian duke and Princess met  
And drank the Georgian peasant's sweat;  
Sniffing petrol in the air,  
Britons turned machine-guns here;  
This town Jordania's salesmen sold  
Upon the Paris Bourse for gold,  
Till workers, roaring like the sea,  
Struck down the head of tyranny.  
Now creeps the tramway from afar  
Shining with the Soviet star;  
The peasant leads his mountain ass  
Where commissars and comrades pass;  
Red soldiers, singing in the rain,  
Swear to defend the workers' gain;  
And from the walls look Lenin's eyes,  
Impatient, resolute and wise.

*Tiflis.*



DRAWING BY LOUIS LOZOWICK

**INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE**





DRAWING BY LOUIS LOZOWICK

**INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE**





DRAWING BY WILLIAM GROPPER

## STOCK EXCHANGE

"WHAT WILL YOU TRADING FROGS DO ON A DAY  
WHEN ARMAGEDDON THUNDERS THROUGH THE LAND:  
WHEN EACH SAD PATRIOT RISES, MAD WITH SHAME.  
HIS BALLOT OR HIS MUSKET IN HIS HAND?"

—VACHEL LINDSAY





DRAWING BY WILLIAM GROPPER

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# BUD'S WIFE

By YOSSEF GAER

THERE were many things other than his wife Bud might have thought of at work. Life, for instance, would have been easier if his work were not washing dishes and kitchen furniture all day. Even if the pay were just the same. Just seventeen dollars a week—and meals, paid for with forty minutes of his noonday rest. Or he may have thought of his child, Susie, who was born with a hump and could not walk yet, though she had passed the age of three. But Laura crowded out all other thoughts.

A wife that keeps her husband thinking of her all the time is a strange being. Bud knew none stranger than his Laura—big-bosomed, austere, and ever-silent Laura. When he first met her, some six years before, she was not that way. Though even then her stature, beside his, emphasized his smallness. He had remained just as short and narrow-shouldered as when he was a boy of twenty-one, but Laura had gained in height and seemed to thrive on misfortune. Perhaps a man is master of his fate who is master of his will, but to Bud Laura's growing stouter by degrees and silenter each day seemed his doom. If he were single, and life his own, Chance would open gates for him to enter. Now Laura blocked all doorways. Laura standing there so silent, and with Susie in her arms.

"Whatsamatter there!" the cook's voice growled.

Bud's hands began to race across the greasy pot, but he still wondered what would happen to Laura and the child should he run away and seek his fortune elsewhere. Elsewhere. And without a wife and child to care for. Without a burden to chain him to misfortune. Perhaps he could learn a trade worth the knowing and thwart the fear of being fired from his job only to accept a worse occupation for less pay.

Elsewhere and exempt from obligation. Alone. Perhaps he could reach West where life, he heard, was life, and opportunity was free. Perhaps he would grow rich before very long. Perhaps. Then he would return to Laura and Susie. Return with a fortune. Take them to his home the like of which they had never seen from within. Take them to his home in the West.

Elsewhere and without Laura and the child as sinkers about his neck. Maybe he would drift to where they search for gold. And stake a mine there. Brave men before him had done that, he read. And he was as brave as any. Had he not served his country in a war the like of which was unknown to either history or man before? Two bullets in his legs and the gas in his lungs were there to prove it. And the medal on his Sunday suit. He was as brave as any man. And where they search for gold he could stake a mine. Perhaps. Then one fine day he would return to Laura and the child. With stories of adventures, and nuggets each larger than the

swollen toast in the sink. He would set one on a pin as a birthday present for his wife. For Laura. Laura.

The pot was clean, and he hurried to get started on another. The large pan that had been burned at the bottom. Cleanser would not do it. Steelwool would not do it. A coin. "Can that noise there!"

Damn that cook! Bud, who had fought a brave war, to fear a sloppy grouch! Damn that cook, and the job, too! He'd quit and look for something more to his liking. And with better pay. Laura may not like it. Laura. Laura said that if they could afford it Susie might be helped to walk. Rot. Mere talk. Laura had such notions. She would drop a word and then refuse to speak. Bah!

His rolled-up sleeves were wet, and his pants clung to his knees with a slimy warmness. Greasy work that soaked into his being and urged him to revolt. Escape! The idea stared deridingly into his face. Escape! Run away! For months the single thought had wormed into his mind and ate at the core of him. Escape! It stared deridingly into his face. But what he saw was Laura. Laura looking at him in her austere way, seeming bigger than he had ever seen her before. His thoughts of freedom melted like left over ice-cream under hot water in the sink.

On payday his rickety temptation gained in firmness. Carrying seventeen dollars in a small yellow envelope to his wife made him certain of his rights in life. On such days his drifting plans paraded with a swagger. He went West. He explored regions where gold parts from the earth with greater ease than grease from a burnt pot. He opened a restaurant all his own in a Western city. A childless millionaire adopted him as his only heir and son. Such things happened every day he knew. He read it in the papers. Such things happened. And always, when his fortune was made, he returned to Laura, to prove to her his worth.

But the dishes piled up high. The curse of them slumbered in their endlessness. The day began in the middle and stopped there. The old clock on the central stove stopped for hours while he was at work. It fooled him. It started to move each time he turned his head. Damn that cook, anyway! Only twenty minutes to two. Seven o'clock was more than centuries away. Perhaps he was mistaken. Perhaps it was ten after four. No. He was not mistaken. They were shooting dice in the corner. Sam and 'Bo and the cook's helper. Bud's fingers itched to roll the bones. Once, when in the army, he won a small fortune in that way. Forty bucks. But he could not afford to try his luck now. Even though he knew he would win. Laura never asked him what became of the rest of his pay when the envelope was underweight. She only looked at him. What could be in her mind when she looked at him that way? Six years, and he had not yet learned to under-

stand. Women are stupid, he consoled himself. A stupid puzzle.

"Give us a hand there!"

The iceman. Bud pretended he had not seen him enter. But the cook growled, and Bud jumped forward to offer his assistance. Cold drops trickling down his perspiring back was worse than the feel of greasy water. But he must take care not to soak the money in his pocket. Seventeen dollars in a yellow envelope. Laura said he ought to ask for a raise. Ask for a raise and be fired, eh? But she would say no more. She only looked at him.

All day long he wondered whether Laura was not right after all. Damn them, he deserved more for the work he did. They may fire him. Give him the gate. Damn their souls, let them! He'll go West if they do. He'll go West and try his luck there.

And when the day was over and he dragged himself from the polluted air of the kitchen into the thick mass of perspiring humanity, rudely shoved into overcrowded subways, escape still lured him with its promise of freedom. His feet were tired. Flat and stupid the subway air pressed upon his chest. Like the evil smell of a burnt pot. Screeching coins upon a burnt kettle rang in his ears. And the vision of escape from Laura and the child still dangled before him. A rude and rudely-shoved crowd forced him forward to the head of the car.

Bud relaxed against the motorman's door and looked into the endless tunnel with its green and purple lights that winked and turned red. It was good to rest one's back like that. If only his feet were not so tired. He noticed the fat woman with the shopping bag in the corner. If she were to move over a little there would be place for him. He wished to ask her. But he did not move. He relaxed against the motorman's door and watched the tunnel ahead and the stations they passed one by one. Then he turned to fight his way out.

The turnstiles clicked and clicked, counting those who left as they counted those who entered. Tired feet shuffling, scurrying past each other. Up and upwards. Night had not yet joined the endless ill-illuminated night of the subway. Somewhere a sun was setting over lakes and meadows. But Third Avenue at that point was oppressed with humid drabness dominated by the thudding curses of the railway overhead. Silhouetted miniatures as far as the eye could reach sought shelter and protection from the squatting supports of the rails above. For Susie. She sat there in the sun Carts, baby-carriages, and horses. Perhaps Laura was amongst them coming home with Susie from the park. St. Mary's Park was not so far away. And Laura went there for fresh air making things for herself and the child. Or read discarded newspapers amid the droning sound of greedy flies on garbage.

He stopped before the cigar store.

Laura. Laura did not like to see him smoke cigars when Susie needed milk. Laura. Bud walked in and asked for a ten-cent cigar. And as he lighted it he dropped authoritatively that the heat would subside before two days were over. The man behind the counter agreed with him. With the newspaper he had picked up in the subway under his arm, and the cigar in the corner of his mouth, Bud left the store. He stopped on the sidewalk and looked up and down the familiar street. He felt at home in this New York neighborhood—more at home than in the middle-Western town of his youth. Here, in this short block, he felt a man amongst men. People thrived upon his trade. The butcher called him Mr. Eustiss. And when his rent was paid he was given a receipt with his full name neatly written across the top. Bud puffed his cigar energetically.

The five flights of stairs to his apartment tired him, and he slunk into the house all out of breath. The wooden couch grunted as he flung himself upon it. It grunted as the master of the house sank down upon its sagging spring. Bud sighed in relief. It was good to sit down. On his own couch. His. As were the chairs and the bed and the table. His. Susie was on the floor amid a mass of things and paper-toys of Laura's invention.

"Laura!" Bud called towards the kitchen.

A chain of dirty yellow cars swung past the window and shouted a hollow curse into the room.

"Laura!" Bud called again.

And another chain of cars raced by, a little further, and going in the opposite direction.

Susie turned to her father inviting him to come close and play with her. She invited him with a gurgling chatter and a smile. And the smile upon her pale face, sunken between her little shoulders, was a grimace that shamed Bud's pity. He grinned back to her and softly patted her head as he seated himself near her on the floor. Then he wondered what to do to make her happy for a moment. He searched amongst the mass of paper-toys. Cows and pigs and chickens. Laura had made them all. Six years had not weaned her from the things she knew since childhood. Six years of subways, elevated trains, tenements, and all the ills bred of modernity had not made Laura forget the pigs and the cows of her father's farm. Bud played for a while with the paper-toys amusing himself with their appeal. And when he tired of arranging the farm, he left Susie with an apologetic grin, and seated himself on the couch again. There was much in the paper he had not read yet.

Completely relaxed in the luxury of words that catered to his intellect, he turned from page to page, devouring indiscriminately jokes, news-items, scandal, advice to the love-lorn, letters from readers. Trains raced by the open window. Bud was not aware of them.



He was aware that his feet gradually thawed out from their fatigue, and his entire body curved in the joy of resting.

Suddenly the print before him blurred into a jumbled mass.

"Laura!" he called towards the kitchen.

He threw the paper aside and nervously strode over to the kitchen door. It screeched as he forced it open. Another elevated train raced by and drowned the noise with noise. Laura was not in the kitchen. Where could she be? Bud glanced at Susie and the weak chin below his loose mouth crumpled. What would become of the child if he ran away just then? Laura would take her to her father's farm. Perhaps that would be best for her. Perhaps it would be best for Laura, too.

He took out his pay envelope and counted the money. How far West could he get on that? He recounted the money. Then he rushed into the room adjacent and pulled out from the closet his Sunday suit. As he held it up to the light he brushed it with his hand and inspected the medal covering the lapel button-hole. He returned the suit to its place. He would not take it with him. He would not take anything. Just the money. Again Bud counted his week's pay. Where would Laura get enough to pay her fare to Minnesota? Sell the furniture. Not enough. Leave his pay to help her, that's what he should do. Just take enough to take him to—take him to—to Philadelphia. There he would start from the beginning. And if he had luck he would return to Laura and the child. Susie was on the floor playing quietly with her paper toys.

Bud sank down on the couch and folded his arms over his knees. Susie, aware of being watched, displayed her skill in arranging the toys, punctuating each movement with a hissing: "S-s-s-see? S-s-s-see?"

If he should run away just then, what would Laura think and say when she returns? Returns from where?

"Where did mamma go?" Bud demanded of Susie.

"Mamma?"

"Yes."

"Gone!"

"When did mamma go?"

Susie picked up a paper cow, squared her hunched little back, and placed the cow near a paper-fence.

"S-s-s-see?"

"When did mamma go?" Bud came near and bent upon his knees.

Susie raised her serious eyes and asked half-frightened: "Mamma?"

"Yes!"

"Gone!" she intoned.

"When did mamma go?"

A black cat with long whiskers claimed Susie's attention. She picked it up from amidst her toys.

"S-s-s-see?"

Bud walked over to the open window and looked down the street. A solid mass of jumbled squatness, sordid and distorted in the twilight. Yellow cars and yellow faces swung by on the elevated tracks. Green and orange and red lights blinking from the signal posts. Smoke-stacks lazily exhaling grey puffs of vapor. Bud



DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

## THE UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE

turned and entered the kitchen. Clean dishes on the clean oil-cloth of the table. Order. There was order in the room. Bud turned on the light. The dull reddish glow added gloom to the narrow-chested kitchen. The place was clean. And empty. Bud turned out the light and returned to Susie.

A string of seven cars had just thudded by. In the fading noise of its vibrations Bud seemed to hear a voice. He turned his head in the direction of the illusion. What if Laura left? What if Laura had gone away leaving Susie on his hands?

"Laura!" Bud called in a frightened voice towards the kitchen.

Then he paused as if the walls could answer.

They should have moved away from where the noise of the trains was not so maddening. He did not mind the noise. But Laura did. Laura said so. Maybe, being home all day, she could not stand it. Maybe that was why Laura was so silent. In the morning, before he left for work, he now remembered, Laura said something about a change. Did she mean—did she mean to leave him—did she think of it even then?

Bud turned and glanced around the room. If only he knew when she left. He started for the door. And stopped. He pulled out his watch. Ten more minutes. If she did not return within ten minutes he would go out and ask the neighbors. He looked at Susie. Susie. Poor child. He came over slowly, his chin quivering. Poor child. He sank down upon the floor and patted Susie's little head. Susie purred like a crippled kitten feeling the touch of an affectionate hand. She gurgled happily and raised her paper

toys one by one, exclaiming each time an arrested: "S-s-s-see?" "S-s-s-see?"

Poor Susie. Poor child. What would become of her? What would become of the child, and what would become of him with Laura gone? Alone. Life would be impossible. With Laura and a home he was anchored to a safety-zone. Alone. Without Laura he would be drifting scum. Scum. He was not good enough for her. For Laura. But what of Susie? Poor child. Poor Susie.

The shadows of passing cars flitted by on the floor. The sudden realization of his loneliness pressed upon his mind. The thought of escape was gone, and the fear of being left alone with Susie cowed him. Laura. Laura was so brave to carry on the way she did. She was too good for him. If not for her where would he have been by now? He would have been a bum. He was poor, but he was good and had a home. Now what would become of him and the child? He patted Susie's head again. And she showed him a lion with five tails cut out of a magazine.

"S-s-s-see?"

Bud nodded his head, and wondered what to do next. He should go and ask the neighbors. But he did not move. The grey shadows in the room grew cold and veiled themselves in heavier cloaks. Bud's mind was a puzzled blank revolving bits of shadows in the hope of placing them into order to give them meaning. An elevated train with lighted windows swung by. High above, on the ceiling, the shadows swerved in the opposite direction, and disappeared.

"Laura!" Bud called in a helpless voice towards the kitchen.

The door to the hallway opened and Laura, short and squat in the shadows, entered all out of breath, burdened with a mass of uncouth parcels.

"Smatter?" she grunted.

"Where've you been so late?" Bud jumped up from the floor.

"S Thursday." Laura swung in to the kitchen.

"Oh—"

"Mamma!" Susie began to cry.

Bud turned on the light, picked up his newspaper, and sank down on the couch. There were still some items he had not read. And he read them with the peaceful expectation of a feast. It was Thursday. Thursday Laura went to the charitable institution that helped them make ends meet. On Thursdays they had chops, prepared as only Laura could prepare them. Laura. His Laura.

## HURRAH! HURRAH! A New Masses Ball!

Keep the night of Friday evening, December 3rd, open, if you live in New York City! You will kick yourself from Battery to Bronx if you don't, for you'll be missing the first NEW MASSES BALL to be given at Webster Hall on that night. The dances of the old Masses and Liberator brought together for a convivial riot every red, Bohemian, worker and intellectual of interest in New York. This ball promises to do the same. Remember—December the 3rd. Send us the names of friends whom you want us to invite.

NEW MASSES



DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE



NEW MASSES



DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF LIFE

# THE GREAT GOD VALENTINO

By GENE COHN

IT is probable that, quite unconsciously, Hollywood will place over the grave of the "Great Sheik" a phallic monument. And that will be the final irony! The restless clay of Rudolf Guglielmi—otherwise Valentino—may shiver for a moment, and then forever surrender to his symbol. Living or dead, he was fated to be prey of a mask he had come to loathe. Therein lies the mockery of those macabre scenes enacted about his coffin.

First you must understand this: only Valentino died! Guglielmi had long since perished.

It was Valentino who rocked the front pages of the papers with headlines; Valentino who was adored by sex-starved women; Valentino who inspired the rioting crowds; Valentino who was commercialized, capitalized, coddled, primed and wept over; it was Valentino who lay in state while an army of police kept back the crowd; Valentino who went across the nation to be laid at rest in Hollywood midst more furor and hysteria; Valentino for whom the managers rung their gold-palmed hands, for whom women fainted and girls shrieked.

Guglielmi was forgotten. Guglielmi would have been buried in his little Italian town. Guglielmi, the somewhat sensitive, life-loving Latin lad had disintegrated behind the mask of Valentino. Poor Guglielmi had been tortured, thwarted, misunderstood, insulted, starved and neglected. In a befuddled struggle for gold, fame and success he slipped on a mask, moulded by those gold-palmed sculptors of Hollywood. He was never able to take it off. And he died with it on. Thereafter Valentino went on living, but the wandering spirit of the perished Guglielmi had entered his body, after the fashion of Dybbuks.

So that Valentino knew no peace! It does not seem incredible to me that Valentino was slain by Guglielmi, just as Guglielmi was slain by Valentino.

The Great God Brown! Exactly! The Great God Valentino!

\* \* \*

Certain it is that in the last weeks of his life Valentino rushed to many priests crying to them to relieve him of the Dybbuk and restore him to peace and happiness. There was, perhaps, no uphappier, more thwarted and soul-sick mortal in all America.

Pathetic victim of his mask, Valentino wanted above all other things to conform to the national concept of a "man's man."

It was too late. He had made the mistake of becoming a symbol of allure. And this had set loose the great pack of ravenous women; that vast sisterhood of the unsatisfied. Women, women, women—millions of them—sex-starved, mal-adjusted, inhibited, neurotic, confessing in notes, in actions, in conversations the inadequacy of their love-lives. The women loved him but the men? Well, what could be expected from the sex whose inadequacy stood thus revealed?

Men taunted him, suspicioned him, ridiculed, sneered, whispered, wrote taunting bits in the papers. Then it was that he tried to tear off the Valentino mask and reveal Guglielmi. Too late! No one would look or listen.

Jest of the gods! This Valentino could not so much as hold the two wives won by the boyish, dancing Guglielmi!

But the mobs of ravenous women somehow seem to have forgotten that.

"Sheik," "great lover," "Superhero," they shouted—phrases coined in the great publicity mills that grind sense and reason into a disgusting mess to lure the sex-starved to the box-office.

Publicity! Publicity! Publicity! Love nests . . . hot love . . . hot stuff. . . . The stuff that made Valentino and killed Guglielmi. . . .

He pleaded, protested, despaired. Across the nation went the cry for more, more, more of the mask. The spirit of Guglielmi grew restive in the vitals of Valentino. Revolt stirred.

Suddenly came a climax!

Valentino was sent on the road for "personal appearance" publicity. In Chicago a flippant paragrapher made reference to powder puffs and dandyism in connection with the "great sheik."

For a few hours the miracle of rebirth was achieved. Valentino was no longer "the sheik" and "the great lover," but Guglielmi, the Latin lad, who wanted to conform to the concept of a "man's man."

Swell stuff! First page publicity! Great stunt!

But not for this tortured pride. What to do? A challenge to a duel was issued. The whole nation roared. What a swell publicity stunt!

Guglielmi was deadly serious. He cursed his mask; he cursed the gold-palmed hands that held him; he protested, raged, pleaded. . . .

And then a strange thing happened. . . . An almost ludicrous thing.

The "great sheik" made an appointment with that super-major-domo, Mencken.

It was one of those humid, melting

days in early July. Mencken arrived greatly puzzled. A woman he described as a "charming hostess" met him, and left him with the "Sheik."

What followed must have been variously pathetic and ludicrous.

Guglielmi, like a child going to confession, had determined to go to one who represented to him the fountain-head of cynicism and wisdom. In this one decision, perhaps, may be found the very core of this confused, baffled young fellow, and, mayhap, of millions more.

\* \* \*

I say it was a hot, humid night. Each peeled off his coat and rolled up his sleeves. And into the astonished ears of Mencken fell the naive story of bafflement. It was Guglielmi—a perplexed child in a strange land—laying bare his unhappiness.

The "sheik of sheiks," sitting on top of the world . . . million dollars a year . . . all the women are crazy about him . . . goin' to clean up on his next picture. . . .

A pathetic, tortured Guglielmi pleading to know what he could do; which way he might turn; how he could assert his manhood; how he could slay Valentino, the sheik. . . .

I don't know what Mencken told him. I have heard varied versions. The most likely seems to be a reply that nothing could be done . . . the gold-palms had made their model and he could take it or leave it. . . . He couldn't fight back. . . . Guglielmi was dead to the world. Only Valentino, the sheik, lived.

\* \* \*

Not many weeks later the Sheik himself lay dying.

All about the true believers made obeisance to their symbol.

The headlines wailed and the millions took up the cry.

Reporters overflowed a large room on the ground floor of the hospital building. It had been a reception room, now converted into a press room.

Publicity! More than any hospital has had in years. Great!

The reporters overflowed the chairs

and piled on the table. A leisurely bridge game went on in the press room hour after hour. . . .

"Wish ta hell he'd either get well or die. I've lost nine bucks today!"

Eight floors up a rough looking man, with hat tilted on the side of his head kept sentry duty at a white door.

"Gotta keep the nuts out. . . . Never been so many nuts loose. . . . Yeh, I'm a special dick. . . . Say if half the damfool women that come around was to get in. . . ."

Downstairs on the first floor the swift hands of the titian-haired phone girl darted like leaves in a wind. The pack is loose. The millions of women begin to fear for their symbol.

"Los Angeles on the line. . . ."

"It's Pola Negri calling. . . ."

"Oh, boy, that'll make Page one!

Notice she mentioned her name first. . . ."

"Ah she's a publicity hound." . . . "She's slick. . . ."

Maybe she loved him; maybe she didn't.

What difference does it make? It all got in the papers: faintings, shrieks, phone calls, hysteria, \$3,000 widow's gown, photographs, tears, interviews. . . .

Lovely Polish girl . . . artist . . . perishing behind the mask of Pola Negri modeled by the gold-palms of Hollywood . . . will she die there, too? . . .

\* \* \*

The word has been passed. The press agents are on their toes. Chance of a lifetime! Getcher name in the poiper! Come one come all. Chorus girls, cabaret dames, hop-heads, undertakers. . . .

"Here's a flash, fellahs. . . . Girl took poison 'cause she loved Valentino. . . ."

No, she didn't die. Just burned her lips and got her name in the paper. One of the tabs gave it a picture.

Yeh, there was the girl he had with him on his last party. Step right into the press office boys and get her pictures. Sure, all over the country! Sure fire! Bet she's made. . . .

Statements . . . statements. . . .

"Yes we were going to make up again. . . ."

"It was the last girl he loved. . . ."

"He told me he didn't care a rap for Pola. . . ."

"If he had lived he would have come back to me. . . ."

Women, women. . . . Take their pictures. . . . Be sure and get a good leg picture. . . . Publicity! The stuff that had poisoned the dead man!

Columns of it. . . . Pages of it. . . . But not one had wept the passing of Guglielmi. . . . Only Valentino!

And so they passed about his bier, and looked upon the mask; fighting, tearing, smashing. . . . Yes, it was the sheik. . . . It was Valentino. . . . Valentino was dead!

I believe there was some mention that a certain Guglielmi, a brother, came to look after his affairs. I saw a paragraph or two. There might even have been a photograph in the tabloids.

## EXIT HOMUNCULUS

The man was Jenkins, huh? Give him the air.

Fire him. We can't keep dumb-bells here for sport!

His work is bum; he never seems to care;

His gabble's too damn long, his sight too short.

For the most simple work, the old fool takes

Two hours too much, by God. And when he's done,

You bet your boots it's riddled with mistakes—

Can him: the man's no use to anyone.

Thirty-five years in this infernal hole,

Drudging for petty wages like a clod.

Now it was over. He must save his soul,

Jenkins stuck out a scaly tongue at God

And with unerring aim at ten to three

Blew his tired brains out in the W. C.

Jacques Le Clercq



# MINE SHOTS

By EWALD SANDNER

When my Old Man told me to "put on the harness" and start for the picks with him, I was the proudest kid in our little Illinois mining-town. I was fourteen years old. Now I had a real job digging coal.

On the way to the mine I went past the Lutheran parochial school where I had received all the education of the school sort that I was ever to have. The school was run by an old codger who spent his time trying to pound a fire and brimstone religion into us miners' kids. We spent our time wishing we were out of there and down below at the face, digging alongside of our old men. I was stumbling along loaded down with tools, sweating under a hot sun, with my bucket hitting the ties, when I passed that school, but I still remember how I laughed to myself when I saw how the other boys looked longingly after me. For now I was a man at last, I was very happy. That was twenty-three years ago.

\* \* \*

Old Man Moritz worked in the first north entry of our mine. His face had been burned so that the splotchy skin of it looked like paraffin. His ears were as thin as tissue. That was gas. It had caught Moritz. The company said it cost too much to blow it out of the mine. When Moritz came out of the hospital, he got his job back, but nothing more. There was no compensation law in Illinois at that time and the union was not strong enough to force the company to pay anything to Moritz.

\* \* \*

Soon after I started work, they found Hoppman, the mine examiner, with his face in the gob and his clothes and shoes burned off him. Gas again. Many times Hoppman had reported gas in the entry where he was finally killed, but the company always ignored his reports. Now it had got him and a lot of us began to talk about the way the company was killing and crippling the miners. But there wasn't much we could do about it. The old heads warned us that if we got too noisy the Super would "run us down the tracks," that is, fire us on some pretext or other. "Keep your mouth shut," said my father, "and dig coal. When I was young like you, back in the old country, I tried to raise hell like you are doing and all I got was a discharge. Your mother and I nearly starved before I got another job and saved up enough to come to America. There's nothing in this kicking business. At that you kids are lucky you have any sort of union. Before the union came, we would shoot and load all day and pretty near all night and on Sundays too. We worked without any scales and we had no check on our coal. The mines was wet and gassy, worse than they are now."

"Keep your mouth shut," said my father, "and dig coal."

\* \* \*

But a lot of us youngsters kept on kicking and by and by, the older men and the foremen and the small town shop-keepers and their hangers-on be-

gan to call us "Socialists." One night a drunken driver came into the back room of the saloon where we were chewing the rag and staggered over to our table and pounded on it and shouted:

"By God, if you fellers don't come through clean and line up with the G. O. P., we respectable citizens are going to chase you clear out of this town. You are getting to be nothing but lousy Socialists."

That was long before the War and we just laughed at him. We thought we had a right to speak out what was in our minds. We learned different during the War.

\* \* \*

Sometimes one of our crowd would say:

"The public wouldn't stand for it if they knew their coal was all smeared over with miners' blood."

Most of us would give the speaker the horse laugh. We figured that all the public wanted was cheap coal and cheaper coal. What did the public care about poor, old, half-blind Moritz or Hoppman lying dead with his face in the gob or all the good men taken out after an explosion or all those crippled diggers wandering helplessly about the Illinois coal camps begging for handouts to keep wounded bodies and souls together? What did the white-collar dudes care about all this, so long as they kept warm from the coal we dug.

\* \* \*

One day I told the boss that I wanted a load of timber and a couple of cross-bars to set under the bad roof in Number Nine room where the soapstone was filled with niggerheads and the water was singing through like a phonograph record. The boss told me I would get the timbers when he got good and ready and "don't you go starting none of that Socialism around here you little snipe or I'll run you down the tracks." When the whole shebang fell out to the grass roots the next day and I laid off while the boss had a gang cleaning up the mess, I began to think about what he had said. It seemed like every time any of us put up a kick about rotten conditions we were being called "Socialists," although that time we didn't know Karl Marx from a pit mule. Maybe there was something in this Socialism business for us. We began to look around. It wasn't long before we had an active Socialist local in our town.

\* \* \*

I suppose it's true that young folks as a rule, think more about religion and have less to do with the organized forms of it than their parents. I never had any truck with the churches in our town, the parochial school had cured me for my hankering for the "old-time religion," but, of course, like any youngster, I used to spend long hours debating about immortality, God, and the existence of Hell. Coal miners are extremists in these things. Some of them are fanatically religious, others as fanatically atheistic. Most of their lives they are so close to death that it's nat-

ural they should be interested in this subject. I remember a long discussion between one tough old atheist and a miner who had just been "saved" at a local revival. Lots of us read Ingersoll in those days; he had spent a lot of time picking on the sky-pilots in Illinois. After the unbeliever had quoted yards of Ingersoll at the convert and the only come back was a mess of Bible verses, the old boy got sore.

"Listen to me, Buddy," said he, "I was in the big strike of Ninety and Seven, the one that got us the union here in Illinois. A bunch of us went over to Staunton on an organizing campaign and we got the men out in jig time. Things looked good for union until the Super got busy and called in the Catholic priest. He went around among the strikers and got them to come to church and then he reared up and told them they was headed for hell on a toboggan unless they went back to work. By God, if those dumbheads didn't fall for the stuff and the next day they marched down the street on their way to the mine with the Super and the priest leading the procession. Us out-of-town miners jeered at them and called them all the names we could think of, which were plenty, but they was scared stiff thinking what that priest had told them. We used to say

that the Staunton strike was broke that time by the coal company, the dear public and God Almighty, all of which parties was looking for cheap coal. Some of them fellows who were religious like you, said, how come the Lord got in on it. And then I had to explain to them, like I'm explaining to you, that this Lord of yours is in an interlocking directorate with the coal companies and the Devil so that Heaven can have a plentiful supply of cheap fuel."

\* \* \*

In those days Socialism was my real religion. After a tough day's work underground, I'd run around town nights, getting the bunch out to meetings, writing resolutions, corresponding with national headquarters, distributing copies of the "Appeal to Reason." I'd eat, sleep, drink Socialism. At last we had found something to give sense to our vague kicking against the bosses, gassy rooms, loose tops and the rest.

Of course we didn't get by without some hot fights. All of us were discharged time and again. We moved from town to town. My kids have been to eight different schools in as many years. But we raised a lot of hell among the slaves, the effects of which are still evident all through that part of Illinois.

## MISSION STIFFS

By DON RYAN

Somebody has given two old bindle stiff a drink of Jamaica ginger. They are scuffling in the doorway of the mission, with more animation than they have felt for weeks while they tramped the California roads.

Squawking at each other like dingy old crows, the decrepit tramps exchange playful shoves that send them reeling about with stiff limbs. They are like wooden figures with their rigid joints and the grotesque angles made by their arms and legs.

Their leathery faces agrin show scraggle teeth. Dirty gray stubble covers their dry cheeks, in which the wrinkles are filled with grime. Their weak and watery eyes reflect mirth and from their throats comes a hoarse croaking that takes the place of laughter.

\* \* \*

The mission door is propped open to the afternoon warmth. The sun displays the mean Los Angeles street in barren decrepitude.

Inside the mission a powerful odor assails the nostrils. This odor is the only thing of power on the decrepit street. It is an odor that has grown by accumulation until its strength is lush, fully complete. A conquering odor, made penetrating by formaldehyde, and carrying in one mighty gust the disembodied presence of every congregation which has filled the mission in the past.

The chairs in the mission are scarred and broken, carved with many an idle blade. *Hobo Harry, Texas Kid, Chicago Cat*—in scrawling letters on backs and seats.

These chairs hold a congregation as

hopeless as themselves. Men on whom the Fates have carved their names in ironic sequence—*Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos*.

*Clotho*, who presides over birth, has fixed her mark upon this hulking figure with the small head, narrow brow over which coarse hair, grown awry, bristles down like the thatch of a penthouse to meet the bristling brows. The little piggish eyes, set close together, the loose, gaping mouth, make evident a man set at birth below his fellows. Deficient in brain, unable to scheme and plot and win his food by stealth, equally unable to acquire the skill to work with tools. A dundering ox, foreordained to toil and to be exploited by his masters. *Clotho* has marked him so.

\* \* \*

This young man, who sits cross-legged, slouching on his chair, has been maimed by *Lachesis*, who conducts the life of mortals. A sneer twists his thin lips as he listens to the promises which the mission folk hold forth. Thwarted by circumstances, hunted by oppression, dogged by the law, he has listened in jail and bullpen and flop-house to the promise of eternal life. His brain, which is clear, has analyzed the elements of religion and discarded the promise. What he desires with the ardor of futility is life here—on this earth—the life he might have had except for the circumstances that made him a bitter rebel.

And on the brow of this old man who leans against the wall, *Atropos* has laid her hand—*Atropos* who presides over the death of mortals. Already her claw-like fingers are closing upon his drying skull. His eyes, deep-



FROM A LITHOGRAPH BY ILONKA KARASZ

## COURTYARD

set in bluish hollows, are closed. His toothless mouth agape emits a husky sound of breath coming and going with painful deliberation. The old man's lungs, wasted by consumption, will soon cease to function. His hollow cheek, over which a yellow-white beard straggles, is laid against the dirty wall. He is motionless, the spark of life barely alight in the ash-heap of his body.

Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos. The Parcae, who, according to classic tradition, control the destinies of mortals, have been maliciously busy with these.

\* \* \*

The girl in the salmon pink blouse tells the crowd that Jesus is their friend, that He will give them strength to bear every burden if they will only trust him.

On the wall behind her a picture of

the Christ, with long dark hair and long silky beard, looks over the crowd with deep-set eyes of sorrow. Enigmatic the face of the picture as the girl on the rostrum makes promises in His name.

At the end of her harangue a gusty *Amen* bursts with startling abruptness from a convert in the corner. A professional mission stiff raises arms and echoes the cry. Others grin.

"What will we sing?" asks the girl.

"Number thoity-eight!" shouts a voice.

Dirty, thumbd hymn-books are picked up. A piano breaks out. The song rises in a quavering chorus. It gains in volume. The cynical young man with the sneering lips has taken it up. But to the words of the familiar song he is singing another version:

*"We shall eat, bye and bye,  
In that beautiful land be-  
yond the sky,  
Work and pray, live on  
hay;  
You'll get pie in the sky,  
bye and bye!"*

Observing him, the creature of slanted brow, imitative as an ape, joins loudly, religiously, in the parody. His wide mouth drips saliva over the word pie.

The old man who leans his bearded cheek against the wall, rouses with a start. The cynic, shouting his parody lustily into the half deaf ears, reminds him of his duty. He thinks there must be soup in prospect. Opening his toothless mouth, the old man emits a series of wheezes. He hopes the mission workers will notice his devotion.

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS RETOLD

By Margaret S. Ernst

Here is "the law" as it was handed down to the Children of Israel perhaps ten thousand years ago:

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water that is under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing loving kindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

In the light of these consider:

The Klan authorizes its religious persecutions by the First Commandment. Bimba, up in Boston, two months ago, stood trial for blasphemy because the tribal Hebrews, some five or six thousand years ago, decreed the Third Commandment. The Countess Cathcart gets ten days on Ellis Island and front pages in the newspapers because the curt Seventh Commandment takes no note of the ifs and whens and hows of our adjustable humanity . . . the papers every day are full of headlines, invoking those ancient tribal laws.

The Commandments undoubtedly have grown outmoded in the flow of centuries. Each one of us must now become his own Moses, fashioning tablets as serviceably as he knows how, lettering them with his concept of what, for this week at any rate, may serve as a living-code.

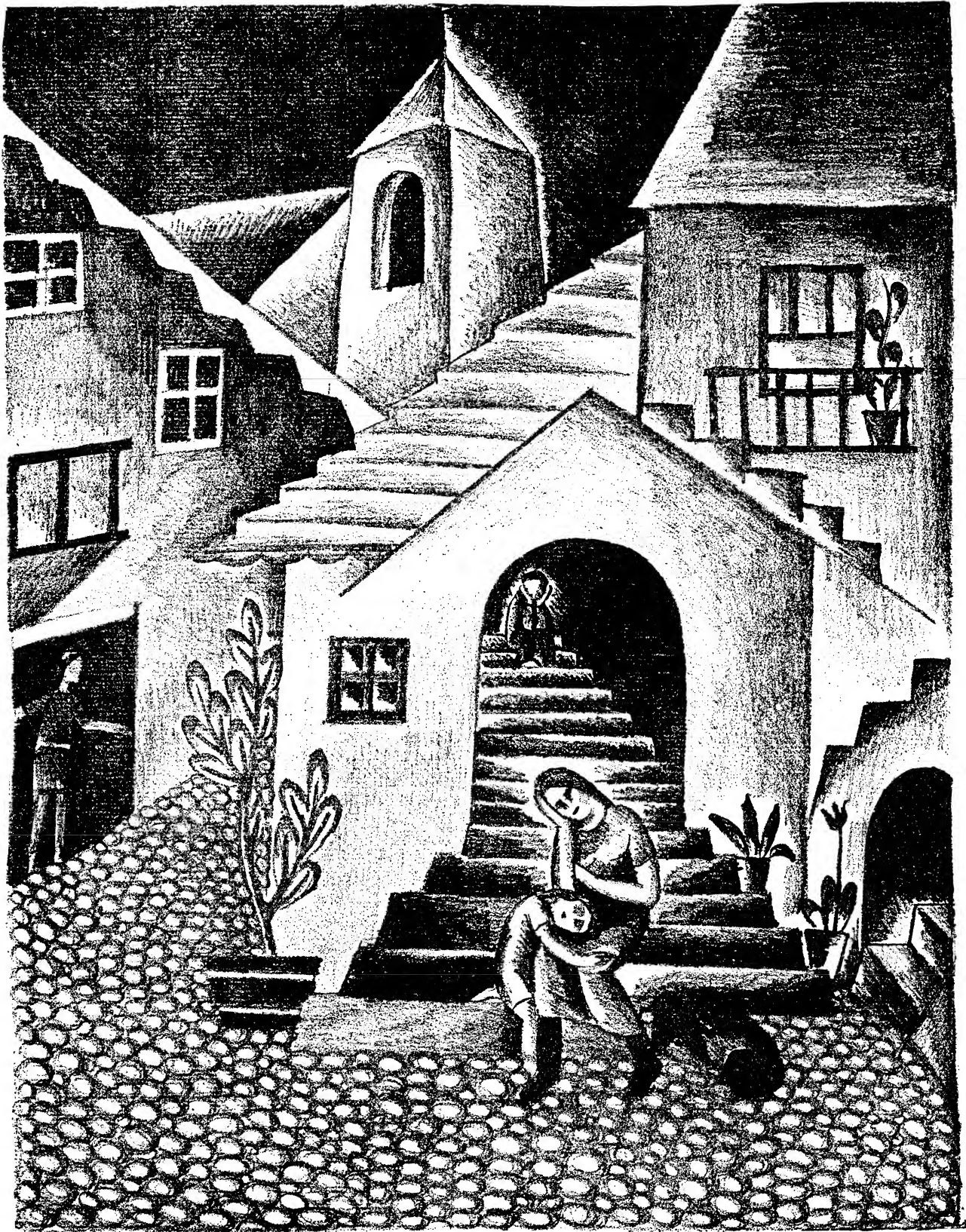
Commandments of affirmation are what we of 1926 must write ourselves, not the negative "Thou shalt nots" of Exodus and Deuteronomy. We speak a new language of radicalism these days. The tongue of a complex civilization goes far beyond the articulations of that small warring tribe whose God was a Thunderer, and jealous.

There is no modern parallel restatement for the First, Second and Third Commandments. As to the First—since tolerance is indispensable in our new society, by all means include an affirmation of god for those who want it, whether they choose for adoration Adonoi in his abstractness or Pan with his goat's feet.

(Continued on page 30)



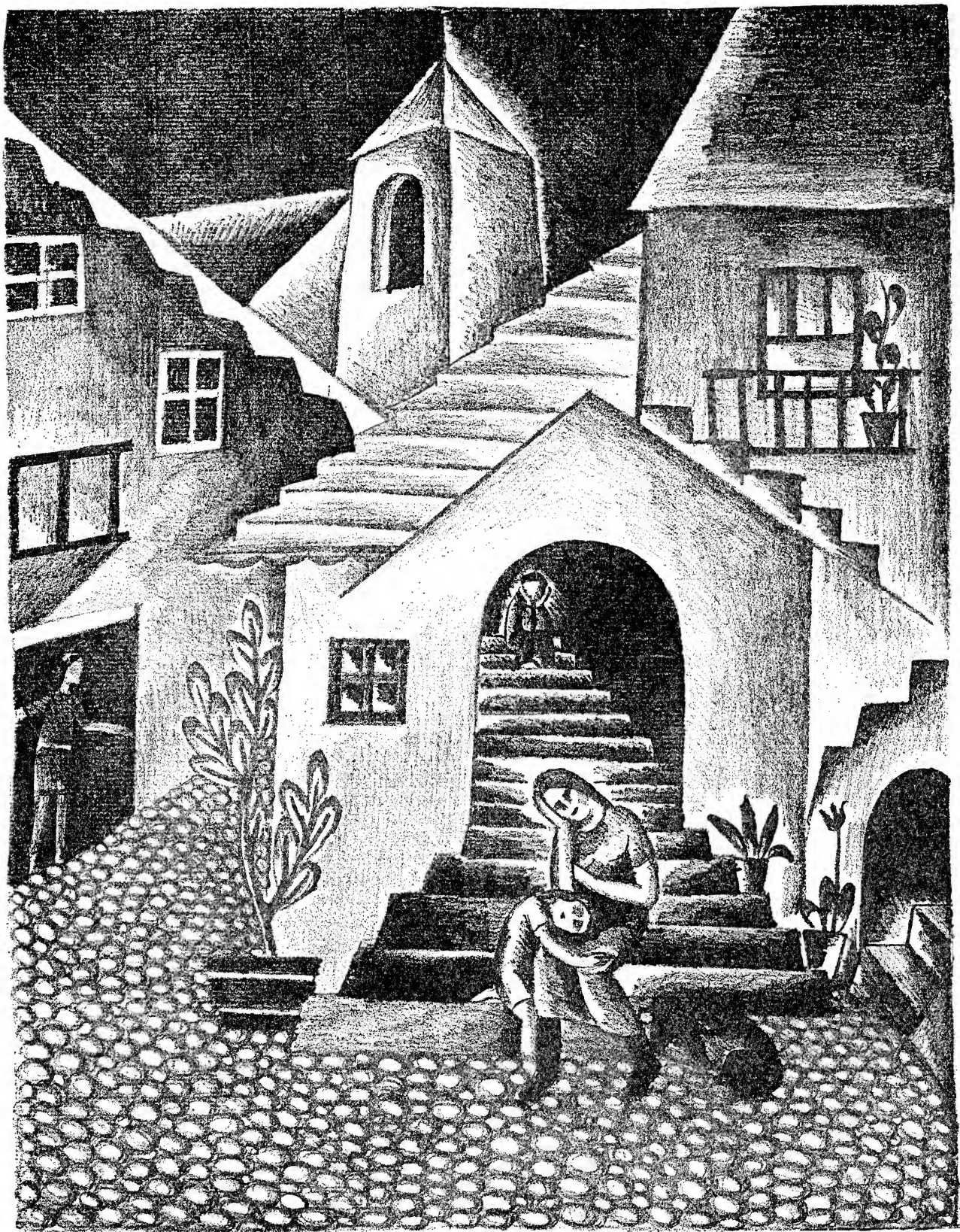
OCTOBER. 1926



FROM A LITHOGRAPH BY ILONKA KARASZ

# COURTYARD

OCTOBER. 1926



FROM A LITHOGRAPH BY ILONKA KARASZ

# COURTYARD



# THOSE TERRIBLE AMERICANS

By ANN WASHINGTON CRATON

THE Boston train was very late. All the way from New York it had crawled through the snow drifts. A February blizzard gripped all of New England. In frantic haste, I had been ordered to Boston by the President of the Union, although I was busily and happily engaged in organizing shirtmakers in Pennsylvania. "I don't want to go to Boston," I protested vainly. The only answer to all of my objections was the stern command, "Take the next train."

Very weary and cold, I stumbled into South Station to be met by a gloomy set of young Italian organizers, who informed me that they were a reception committee. They carried me off to a spaghetti joint, where they reproached me bitterly for my late arrival. It was not until large and heaping plates of spaghetti had been consumed that they could be cheerful. It seemed that the Boston Union was confronted with a most unusual problem. It had waged a gallant struggle against one of the largest and most important clothing firms in the Boston market for ten weeks. With a 100% strike, the firm was managing to fill almost all of its orders. No one had been able to discover where the scab work was being made. Finally Organizer R. had successfully trailed some packing cases to a small and secluded village on the South Shore, about thirty miles from Boston, where a flourishing shop was turning out coats. He had found a number of skilled Jewish and Italian workers there, but the majority proved to be American women. A meeting had been called and a strike declared. While many of the American women workers had attended the first meetings, only seven had answered the strike call. And these seven New England women were rapidly wavering in their faith in the Union. No one could please these seven strikers. Man after man—Jews and Italians—would be sent out from Boston, only to disgrace himself in some most innocent manner by offending their ideals of religion, patriotism, Americanism.

"Do you expect us to lose the strike because of a lot of stupid Americans?" challenged Comrade C. "Every Italian is out of the shop. It's just those terrible Americans, my God, such terrible Americans . . . Americans are the worst people in the world. Jesus Christ, why did Christofo Colombo have to discover this country!"

Forthwith I was presented with the South Shore strike. I was an American, wasn't I? Well, I was expected to organize those terrible Americans and stop the production of coats. "Our Boston strikers are so discouraged," mourned Comrade R. "Every day the firm ships its orders and every day the Union issues a statement that not a coat is being produced in Massachusetts."

Comrade C. escorted me proudly to Quahasset the next afternoon, although it was Sunday. On the train he informed me that I was to live with Miss Lucretia, whom he confided was a

"vergene." I refused flatly to live with Miss Lucretia. "She can't help being a 'vergene,'" answered he blandly, "besides there is no place to live. There is no hotel and you are going to have a nice little room. I helped clean it myself. Miss Lucretia has an old mother and they must have your board. They are more destitute than the others."

Quahasset proved to be a charming New England village, peaceful and lovely in its heavy blanket of snow. Loveliest of all was the eighteenth century church to which, much to my amazement, Comrade C. directed my steps. "Bible class will soon be over," he announced casually. "I want them all to see you, the seven strikers and the scabs. They are all here."

"Do they all go to Church?" I asked aghast. "Certainly," he answered. "Church, Sunday School, prayer meeting and Bible class."

We waited near the gate, while the women passed us. Some of them hurried past with evident embarrassment. With Sicilian gestures, Comrade C. indicated in an unmistakable fashion, both the scabs and the strikers. I surveyed them with inward alarm. They were all of old New England stock, gaunt, weather beaten, hard women. Most of them appeared to be between forty-five and fifty. They were poorly but painfully-neatly dressed. They wore funny little hats, trimmed with feathers, perched on top of their heads and as their hair was combed back tightly and severely from their faces they had a pinched expression accentuated by the cold. These women were the native hundred percent Americans in every sense of the word. Their forefathers had been the Pilgrim settlers of this town. They had the same names that one could trace upon the crumbling tomb-stones in the old burying ground at Plymouth nearby. They had worked since childhood, largely in the shoe factories, leading starved, barren lives, making brave efforts to keep up appearances and to pretend to be the equals of the more prosperous citizens.

Down the church yard walk between the walls of piled snow came two middle-aged, archaic ladies.

"This is Miss Craton, our new organizer," said Comrade C., our organizer. Miss Lucretia nodded grimly. Miss Elvira, her companion, invited me to their house for tea. Comrade C. was also included as a special favor.

"No Eyetalian man has ever been inside my house before, and especially on the Lord's Day," she informed him. "I live alone and I am a respectable woman. Until this last week, when I made up my mind to be a Union girl, I ain't never done anything unless I could see some good would come from it. Now I am all mixed up in my mind. Giving you a little bite before you journey back to Boston, don't seem would make things any better or any

worse. But don't you go getting any wrong impression."

Miss Lucretia took off her shabby coat. She emerged in a wine colored woolen dress, made in a style popular twenty-five years ago, with huge puffed sleeves, a tight bodice and a long full skirt. She was plainly proud of herself as she guarded herself carefully from stray crumbs. Although Miss Lucretia solicited subscriptions for the Ladies Home Journal to help eke out her expenses from her small wages and read it faithfully from cover to cover every month, changes of style in clothes had never seemed to occur to her. Her dress had once been all that was desirable and as it had never worn out, therefore it must be used.

After tea, she thawed considerably and dropping her refined Sunday manners, she became quite chatty about her new role. "My scabbing days are over," she confided. "I wish I had understood about Unions before. I might be somewhere now in paying off Pa's funeral expenses. It has taken some hard lessons to show me, but the last shoe factory strike opened my eyes. I always thought that Unions were fine for men, but I never understood what good they were for women, until now. Why, I was a great one for working for the Boss. I'd get all of the girls to stick to him, and I'd be that proud when he'd ride me home in his limousine during the strike while the other girls rode in the trucks. Then after the strike was lost he cut our wages again, and his wife, who was the president of the Ladies Aid, would insult and snub me at the socials. She would expect me to stay in the kitchen and wash dishes all the evening, when I wanted to wait on the tables and see all the people."

On the way to Miss Lucretia's little hundred year old house, one of the most beautiful in the village, she pointed out a large and ugly modern house. "Aint it elegant," she said. Its owner was Sis Jenkins, who was now acting as leader of the scabs. "She's got it all paid for, and she's got a telephone and she's got a husband. He's stone deaf and seventy years old, and even with the ear trumpet she bought him, he can't hear, but she gives herself airs because she's got a wedding ring. She's got no need to scab. I'll say for myself I always had the mortgages to worry over, and Ma and Pa, even though we did keep him at the poor farm."

"Why does she scab now?"

"She is trying to get into society. Breaking the strike gives her prominence. She rides home in the Boss' Packard now. She drives to Weymouth with the foreman and gets girls from the shoe factories for our jobs. She even has got her poor old husband pulling bastings. Clothing factories are so clean and refined after you have worked on shoes. Everybody is crazy to work there. I loved my job. If we lose the strike I'll have to go back to cementing shoes."

My first strike meeting was held the next afternoon and every afternoon thereafter in Minnie Thomas' parlor. Minnie was a widow and it seemed more fitting for her house to be used. Halls were completely taboo as far as the women were concerned. No lady could go inside of a public hall. The prejudice against foreigners was still strong. Comrade C. worked hard to get jobs for most of them in Boston, but the others came to the strike meetings. They were not allowed to come in the parlor. Their place was in the kitchen adjoining. They were not even admitted to the kitchen until a committee of girls had supervised the manner in which they used Sister Thomas' doormat. The foreigners had no resentment at their isolation in the kitchen or at any of the treatment accorded them, humorously and kindly regarding it as the peculiarities of "old maids" or perhaps as strange American customs. They would attempt amiable conversation from room to room, while I stationed myself on neutral ground in the doorway. Meanwhile the native aristocrats sat stiffly in their chairs, crocheting or tatting. They were always silent and glum. They never seemed pleased or interested. Would they stick to the strike or not? I could not know. I never could penetrate the masks they hid behind. Yet every afternoon I would find them unresponsive, suspicious and apparently disapproving, but still loyal.

After much house to house visiting, a number of other women joined the strike. Many more stopped work. They refused to come to strike meetings or to associate with foreigners but they accepted strike relief and remained in seclusion at home. When the coat shop was practically crippled, the ice of the New England reserve began to thaw. They brought me little presents of a pie or a glass of jelly or some doughnuts, offered apologetically "to help Miss Lucretia out with my board." In reality it was an indication that I had been accepted.

I took heart and called on the arch enemy, Sis Jenkins. Through a half opened door, while her old husband stood with his ear trumpet to hear as much as possible, Sis was emphatic as to her position. "I aint sunk so low that I'll stand so many foreigners around, running things," she said. "I went to all them meetings, myself, and I know what I saw. Eyetalian and Jewish men, with their hats on, smoking all over the place, and even playing cards, bold like, in front of us. And everybody talking some different foreign language. It aint Christian and it aint decent. It aint no place for a lady in such a foreign Union." Then as I led my delegation away came the shout in which the deaf old man joined in. "The Union will never win, the Union will never win."

As a matter of fact, the strike was almost lost. It was the nightly diversion of Miss Lucretia and her old mother, frankly curious and frankly

critical, sitting back against the kitchen wall, in their straight, hard chairs, in disapproving silence to survey their helpless shivering boarder while I undressed. It was bitter cold and the only heat in the house was in the kitchen. "That nightgown is something terrible," Miss Lucretia was moved to comment. "I aint never seen anything like it in my life," giggled Ma nervously, "nothing like it aint ever disgraced my house before. It aint got no modesty and it aint even respectable." Ma made so bold as to cross the room and to take the offending garment from my unhappy hands. She examined it minutely under the lamp. "It ain't got a mite of a sleeve in it and a nice girl like you running around in it in the dead of winter. It is a shame before the Lord." So spake Ma and cast it from her.

That was enough for me. The next morning, with the excuse that I wanted to send a telegram, I hastened to a small general store kept by two maiden ladies, notorious village gossips. On the street I heard a group of women openly discussing me. "It's that Union organizer, they say she aint got a petticoat to her name and that her nightgown is sinful. I'm for Unions, a Union is all right, but I do say that our girls have got to be careful."

I bought the ugliest canton flannel nightgown in the store. It had a high neck and long sleeves, and large china buttons down its front. I wore it that night. At the strike meeting the next day Miss Lucretia told them all about it. The crisis passed, but a new one loomed.

The Boss resorted to violence. The picket line had consisted of a dignified procession of a few oldish women, who reluctantly walked up and down in front of the shop, augmented by some of the younger Italian boys. The minister began to call upon the women and to urge them to give up their unseemly behavior and to return to work, although both factions still attended his prayer meetings. One cold morning only Miss Lucretia, Minnie Thomas and Miss Elvira were on the picket line with three of the boys. Suddenly from out of the shop there appeared the chief of police, an old Civil War veteran, and five husky town toughs. Without warning they jumped upon the boys and beat them unmercifully. From the factory windows Sis Jenkins' crowd howled approval. Gino and Tony were left unconscious in the snow, while Salvatore, in a dazed condition had his cut and bleeding face bandaged by the frightened women, who vainly besought the chief of police for help. His only reply was to advise them to go back to work, while the hired toughs jeered, "Come back again, you damned Wops, and we'll kill you."

Next day the old maids, dressed in their Sunday clothes, went to court as witnesses and heard the Judge dismiss the case as a "boy's fight."

"It just don't seem to me that God could have let that happen," puzzled Miss Lucretia, the devout, when, the following afternoon, my somewhat shaken cohorts assembled once more in Minnie Thomas' kitchen. The flame of battle had burned away all ideas of race or creed. No longer were the

Italian boys segregated in the kitchen. Minnie Thomas was worried about the picket line. She could not endure having Sis Jenkins think that they were scared. They weren't. The old maids were full of fight, but they needed help. I telephoned Comrade C. in Boston.

Two days later about a hundred strikers, employed by the same firm in Boston, arrived in two huge motor trucks. In the cold grey, misty morning light they looked a vast industrial army. Miss Lucretia and her 100% American pickets clutched each other. The new pickets were all foreigners. The Revolution had certainly come. The chief of police called out the reserves, trembling, weak old men like himself. He telephoned to all the neighboring villages for reinforcements. Within an hour he had fortified himself with several sheriffs, the fire department, and the shiny, new patrol wagon, the pride of a town twenty miles away, never before used.

Sis Jenkins, herself, was so plainly nervous that she had to be led past the terrible pickets by two shaky old policemen. Jubilantly Miss Lucretia thumbed her nose at her, with almost the entire village, including the minister, watching her in horror. Miss Elvira and the others shouted names that they had never even whispered before. It was a glorious day for the girls.

Intoxicated with the excitement of their new lives, Miss Lucretia and Miss Elvira vied with each other in deeds of desperate daring. No more militant strikers were ever found. If Miss Lucretia threw mud on the snowy wash of Sis Jenkins, left out over night, Minnie Thomas and Miss Elvira made mysterious journeys to nearby villages and bought up all of the stale eggs, which they heated in the oven to further enhance their value. Armed with the

(Continued on page 28)

## CEMENT PLANT

By JAMES "SLIM" MARTIN

YOU know how it is waiting for a job. All hands sitting around an excavation till a truck turns up with the derrick. The gang is hired, the derrick put up, and then the noise and work, till that hole in the ground is piled in with steel rising tier on tier towards the sky.

Talk goes about of this thing and that. But mainly of women, and overtime jobs. Always the job. The present one. The future one. Those done and past. One man declares he'd like a job in the hobo jungles for the rest of the summer. Too hot in town anyway. And too many men loafing. There is a cement plant being erected up State, who knows where it is? A big connector answering to the name of "Buffalo" advises him not to go on it. Did you ever work on one? Boy its hell. Last year there was one going up in Glens Falls. So a gang of us iron workers shipped up there. Transportation, taxi, everything. We pulled up to the Grand Central and opened the taxi door. A porter boomed out and hooked onto the suit cases and started to pilot us into the depot. You know we were all floaters and hadn't yet become acquainted with New York. He set down the suit cases and we looked around. Nice place all right. Hell of a nice place. We asked him where we could smoke. Right upstairs, gentlemen in the lobby of the Hotel Commodore, you can smoke all you want to there. That man didn't know we were just bridge-men. He must have been looking for Hotel La Europa, or Vienna labels on our suitcases. Me? I didn't even have a Philadelphia label on mine. Worse

than that. Once I was living down on the East Side New York. Fine room. Mice, bedbugs, cockroaches,—oh all the home environment. When I got this room, went out and saw a nut cake in a baking window. Brought it home, but then found I couldn't eat up all that cake alone. Put half into a suitcase and forgot all about it. When I came to pack somebody had done been in that suit case and dragged all that forty-five cent nut cake right out through a little hole. And here I am turning that nice little mouse hole to the rear so no one could think I was along with it, and this fool porter wants to lead me into the Commodore Hotel, rat-hole and all.

Well, we got to the cement plant job at last. Say, we had a good time on that job. Always got seats on the street cars too. Hell yes. When we sat down every one moved away from us. Cement! You'd put your foot down in nice soft cement every time you moved. And the cement would come up, puff, puff, all over you. When we raised a beam we'd holler 'look out below.' The cement would roll out, and make a cloud you couldn't see through for half an hour. Couldn't see the work, couldn't see any one else. We were so covered with it, we couldn't recognize each other only by our sizes. That stuff gets hard too. Can't wash it off. Hell no. It got in our noses and set, till it would take a steam shovel to dig it out. And in our ears. Used to wear a cotton plug in mine. When anyone spoke to me, would pull it out, and say, now, what was that you said, and you'd better

(Continued on page 29)



FROM AN ETCHING BY PEGGY BACON

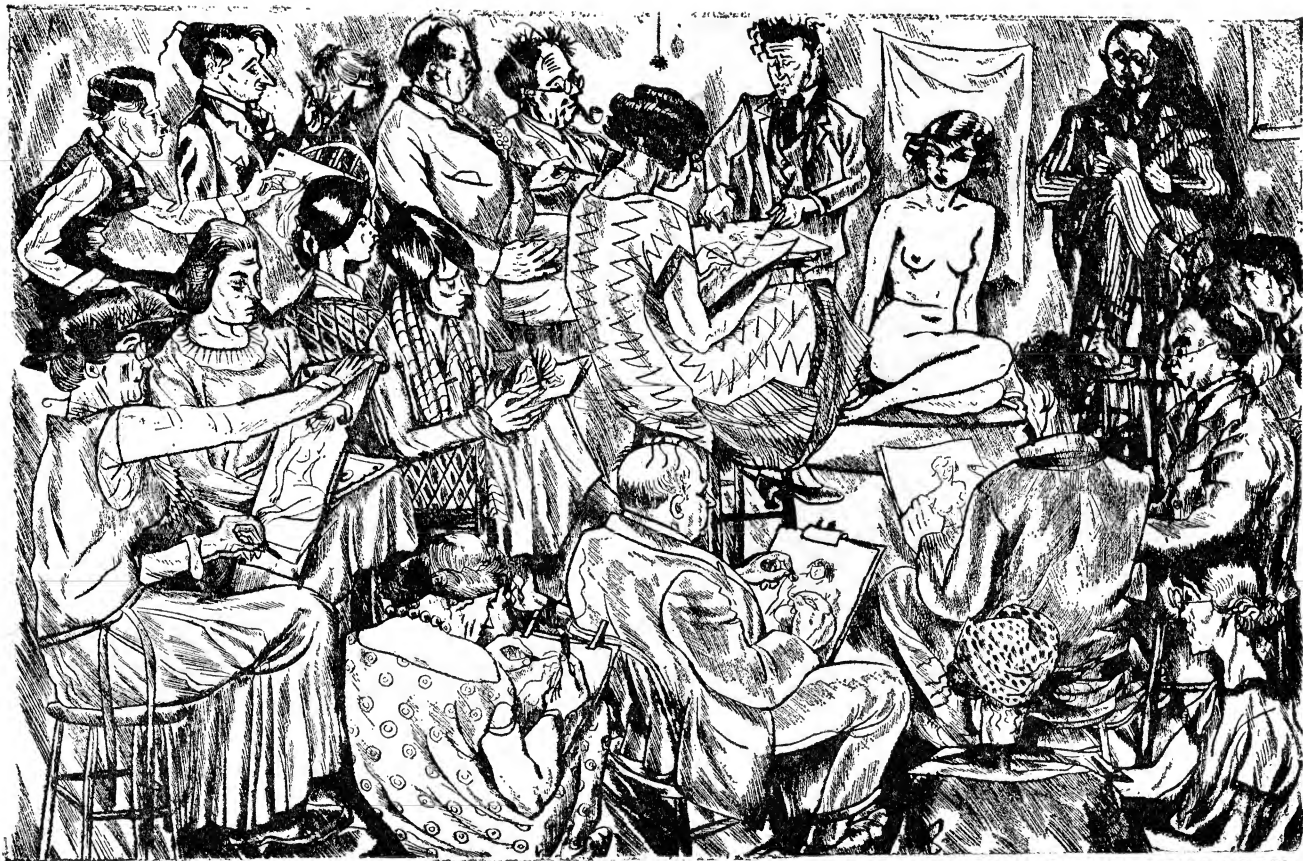
FRENZIED EFFORT





FROM AN ETCHING BY PEGGY BACON

## FRENZIED EFFORT



FROM AN ETCHING BY PEGGY BACON

## FRENZIED EFFORT





DRAWING BY HUGO GELLERT

## "POPE" GREEN IS FOR MILITARY TRAINING

BUT WHAT WILL THE GREAT A. F. OF L. LEADER SAY WHEN THE BOYS IN KHAKE ARE  
BUSTING STRIKES?







# WEISBORD'S FAREWELL TO PASSAIC

By MARY HEATON VORSE

IT is the Thursday before Labor Day in Passaic. Eight thousand textile strikers are to be received into the American Federation of Labor. The price of their admission is that their young leader Albert Weisbord, said to be a communist, step aside completely. The coming of the A. F. of L. charter means his going. Tonight Albert Weisbord is to say good-bye to the textile strikers.

The most dramatic of all strikes is entering on a new phase. This is a strike different from all other strikes. It was a mass strike involving all the people. What had been a little disturbance in Passaic had become a whirlpool. It divided the town of Passaic. It caught Washington in its swirl. Senators disputed about Passaic on the floor of the Senate. For the first time in labor history, men, women and children struggled side by side in a strike. It was the center of the conflict on the tariff.

The air is heavy in Belmont Park with the waiting of ten thousand people. High dramatic trees over their heads weave shadows across their faces. A shout rises to a roar of applause and then singing. Wiesbord, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Henry T. Hunt (who carries with him the charter that has cost so high a price) are getting on the platform. With them Alfred Wagenknecht, the relief director. Wagenknecht has fed these thousands of people, his organization of relief work is a story that has not yet been adequately written.

With every speech the tension grows. Now it is Elizabeth Flynn's turn. Her beautiful voice rings out into the night. The people stir uneasily, there is a moment of almost terrifying quiet. They had not realized that this close and loyal friend must also leave them. She is going out through the country to raise money for the defense of the arrested strikers. She is not leaving them since she is still working for them.

Henry T. Hunt gets up to present the charter. He is the link between the old leaders and the new order. Tonight he represents Thomas McMahon, President of the United Textile Workers. Wave after wave of applause greets him. In him the strikers see the power of the organized millions of workers.

The thunder of their applause keeps time to the mighty shouts of welcome. The presentation is over. Gus Deak, who takes Weisbord's place, reads the charter aloud. The Passaic strikers are no longer an isolated group, they are as Weisbord has it, part of the stream of the American Labor.

Weisbord's turn. Now they let loose. They can't stop cheering, not even Weisbord can stop them. A procession of great baskets of flowers staggers solemnly over the heads of the crowd, passed from hand to hand. The people who have been on strike for thirty-two weeks have collected pennies and dimes and have bought presents. A watch from the strikers, a loving cup

from the Lodi workers. Smaller gifts from individual groups. There are presents, too, for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. The strikers take a solemn satisfaction in these farewell gifts. The crowd sways forward. It applauds and sings. The tension of farewell which has been mounting has been broken. We all breathe easier.

Now Weisbord is saying farewell. Eyes fill with tears. The women all through the crowd weep bitterly. But notice this, there is no despair in this grief. They are not afraid to have

him go. Now he speaks. Here is the final message of the young leader—

"It seems that my head has been demanded for having faithfully and loyally served the interests of the strikers. I am sure that there are many workers who will ask, 'What is it that Weisbord has done that he should be removed?' They will want to know if he is dishonest or disloyal. They will want to know why Weisbord can find no place inside the American Federation of Labor.

"These are questions that President

William Green and all the members of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor will find it very difficult to answer.

"I may be expelled from the Passaic textile strike, but I cannot be expelled from the labor movement.

"I shall continue to devote my life's work to the cause of the working class. I have no interests other than those of the workers. When it became necessary that I remove myself in order to pave your way into the American Fed-

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DRAWING BY WILLIAM SIEGEL

GOING UP

56TH FLOOR! HEAVEN THE NEXT STOP



DRAWING BY WILLIAM SIEGEL

## GOING UP

56TH FLOOR! HEAVEN THE NEXT STOP



# REDMAYNE

By M. H. HEDGES

IN 1893 Redmayne visited Debs in the jail at Woodstock. What the Master said to the young disciple on that day has not transpired. Yet there was impregnation of Redmayne's nature by the other. He went home to Missouri, resigned his middle-class church, and soon after was appointed pastor to a little shabby charge near the railroad tracks in Durham. Redmayne was big, blonde, and sluggish. After his pilgrimage to Woodstock, a new light dawned before his eyes, a new heaven and new earth eventuated on the slightest summons of the imagination, and the big, lumbering frame was galvanized into new energy.

He preached thunderous sermons against capital. He fulminated against the social order that brought men, women and children to material degradation such as he saw through the church windows. And as he spoke he always beheld the immediate materialization of his concept—it was never a year hence, an age hence, but tomorrow—the reassembling of civilization round the social ideal—tomorrow.

Redmayne's sermons did not go unnoticed. It was a nine-day wonder in those days for a preacher of "good family" to step across the line and begin talking to workingmen. He became known as an agitator. Enemies rose up against him. He was attacked one night going home. A woman tried to "frame" him. Then suddenly a series of calamities caught him in their wake. Some mysterious man of wealth from St. Louis bought the land on which Redmayne's church stood, foreclosed the mortgage on the decrepit structure, and the little congregation found itself in the street. There was heroic effort to hold outdoor meetings, with a flare-up of attendance for a while, with big headlines in the city papers. Then attendance began to fall off. Redmayne found himself arrested for disturbing the peace, and the congregation one by one flitted away.

During this period, Redmayne was bolstered up by the consciousness that he had a private income sufficient to keep body and soul together. The Redmaynes had been Missouri farmers, and Redmayne's share of the rich family farm (divided between four children) had been drawn off in cash and deposited in his brother's bank. One night Redmayne received a telegram. It read "Come at once." It was from the president of the Drexel State Bank in Redmayne's home town. When Redmayne arrived in the shabby-genteel river town, assailed by a thousand memories, he went directly to the home of Mr. Drexel.

"Have you seen Ferg?" Drexel almost screamed. It was curious to see the great man so distraught.

"No."

"We thought maybe he had gone your way. He's cleaned us out—we're broke—he's a goddamn swindler, your brother is!"

Redmayne passed his hand dizzily before his eyes. Be it said that he thought first of family honor, and second of himself. He was broke, too.

He left the shattered Drexel, and went out into the still luminous night, his feet following paths to the river. It was sultry; fireflies opened and shut their tropic lamps in fields of clover. He walked. After a time his brain cleared. It—his brother's crime—would leave him free. He turned round, with head erect now, and walked toward the railroad tracks. He waited in the shadow of a box car—calm and determined—until a west-bound freight rumbled by. With free swing, he lifted himself upon a box-car, exulting in his strength. He climbed up the ladder to the top, standing now with bared head, his legs squared, his body pressed against the pushing air. He was free. He was a worker at last.

\* \* \*

When I first saw Redmayne he was 60 years old. Hard, stooped and gristled, his eyes hid behind heavy glasses, yet vigorous and energetic, he struck me as an exceedingly aggressive yet pathetic figure. He was a searcher, a wanderer, a spiritual waif still. What adventures had he encountered when he had set out upon his pilgrimage a generation before? None. Chiefly hard, soul-killing labor—labor that all but sapped his capacity for seeing romantic adventure in any of his drab experiences. A strike in the lumber camps of Washington; a jail sentence;

the heat of California hop-fields; a whore's lips—the first—in Tacoma; typhoid fever in a Mexican mining camp; Tia Juana; the back-breaking agony of breaking stones in the penitentiary at San Quentin; the feel of a man's hands about his throat at Ludlow; the loneliness of North Dakota wheat fields; work, hunger, beer, women, women, beer, hunger, work, work, work.

The president of the invisible republic—the unseen maker of history—had played an ironic joke on Redmayne. Man's life was such a little thing—(Redmayne had learned)—so brief, and the courses of society are so long and devious. Who would have told the wanderer as he swung upon the freight train at the Missouri river town, thirty years previous, that his generation would see the decay of Christianity, and the delay of socialism. How was Redmayne to know that his two master passions, Christ and Debs, were both to be rejected of men? How was Redmayne to know that workingmen would find him—their well-wisher—a strange, outlandish, uncouth figure, as little a part of the panting, machine-controlled industrial civilization, as he was of what he called the capitalistic world.

So it had come to be, and the pathos was, Redmayne did not understand why, when he stood up before working-class audiences, talking the white passion of Christ, that workmen were not ignited. No more did he understand why they were more interested in wages, hours, and conditions, than they were in the cooperative commonwealth. Redmayne had grown gristled talking

to them. He had grown hard, and sour, and futile and distrusting.

The job old Redmayne now held as a sub-billing clerk in the Santa Fe Railway offices did not absorb all his energies. It only wearied him. The endless rows of figures to be added harassed his questing old eyes; and the endless scraps of papers to be matched irked his unorderly temperament until he lived in a state of perpetual conflict. He drew \$65.00 a month. His off hours he devoted to the work of the cause—not to the union to which he belonged, for no group would trust him with the routine business duties of the local—but to the labor movement. He was a great distributor of pamphlets. He was an assiduous ascriber of letters to newspapers. He soap-boxed when he could. He was a hat-in-hand, seeking, seeking, some niche, some point of vantage—a moral climate—an intellectual home—which he could not find.

When the movement for workers' education came along, it looked as if it were going to furnish the right environment for Redmayne. He thought so, too. He entered it flamboyantly. He felt that it was his particular promise. He said so. He shouldered young men out of the way. He talked, argued, bullied, pulled—and was generally ineffective. The workers' education movement had arrived too late. The cosmic jinx which had followed Redmayne followed him still. The unionists with their intense practicality were more interested in research than in the cooperative commonwealth. They dubbed Redmayne a "nut." And though they allowed him to serve as trustee of the school, he was shunted effectively away from "doing any damage."

Redmayne was cast down. For a while, he considered expelling himself from the union, and from the movement. He even considered suicide. But old habits held. He grew a little more gristled, and a little more morose, but he stuck doggedly to his pamphlets, his soap-boxing, his letters. And every day he was at his desk in the dark, dingy billing office, overlooking the tangle of tracks. As usual he looked up at 11:40 to see the Transcontinental come in from the east, and at 2:15 to see the Limited leave for the west. The people in those trains always seemed so happy, so care-free.

One day when he looked up at the oncoming puffy locomotive, he could not see. Mist—dark—was before his eyes. He took his thick glasses off slowly, and rubbed the lenses. He wiped his eyes with the soiled handkerchief. He set the glasses back upon his broad nose. He looked again. He could not see. Only a blur. Only a maze of light.

He understood. His eyes had gone back on him. He dragged his feet out of the office, over the familiar labyrinth of tracks to a doctor's. Yes, it was true. "You have got to give up all eye-work," the physician said.

There were hours of desperation for Redmayne, yet, (believe it or not, it is not fiction) on that day, he began to write verse—peculiar verse, hard and bitter, and aspiring, but with unmistakable marks of distinction. And a kind of peace came to Redmayne. He was through fighting.



DRAWING BY HANS STENGEL

## THE WORSHIPPERS



DRAWING BY HANS STENGEL

## THE WORSHIPPERS





DRAWING BY HANS STENGEL

## THE WORSHIPPERS



DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

## GUS'S COFFEE POT

"I WONDER IF ROCKEFELLER EVER FOUND A COCKROACH IN HIS FRUIT SALAD!"

The industrial machine—the railroad system—of which he was the least, least part—did not scrap Redmayne. He was allowed to move out of the billing office onto the platform. He now began to load freight cars. His wage was \$60 a month.

The last time I saw Redmayne, he was standing beside his hand truck, perhaps only resting, but it seemed to me he was transfixed by something above and beyond him. And there was a glint of indestructible light in his face.

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### JONATHAN EDWARDS

Sad mind, an unaccountable mixture, blent  
Of moral lead and metaphysical air!  
A bleak New England Calvin, you mis-spent  
Your years in baseless thought and terrible prayer.  
You were a saint, and so you'd never mix  
Your Heavenly thoughts with passions of this life  
(Christians are dutiful and not prolix  
Who have ten children of one holy wife).  
Yours was an angel's tongue: you never broke  
Your crystal sermons, splendid and terrible,  
Your false good logic, with a single joke:  
In several awful senses you raised Hell.  
May never another challenge your fierce rule  
And infamy as God's sublimest fool!

E. Merrill Root

### THE PROFITS

The Botany Mills, the first mills in Passaic to make a wage cut last fall, are controlled by German owners.

Max W. Stoehr, president of the Botany Consolidated Mills, Inc., announced last June that his mills had advanced \$4,000,000 to the Kammgarnspinnerei Stoehr and Company textile works in Leipsic and the Eberfelder textile works in Eberfelder, two of the largest textile mills in Europe with thirty subsidiary organizations. By this deal the Botany Mills became joint partners in a German holding company.

When is somebody going to suggest to Mr. Stoehr that if he had not given \$4,000,000 to finance mills in Germany he might have been able to pay his workers in Passaic, New Jersey, a living wage?

Margaret H. Speer.





GUS'S COFFEE POT

DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

"I WONDER IF ROCKEFELLER EVER FOUND A COCKROACH IN HIS FRUIT SALAD!"

# THE CZAR BUMS ME FOR A CIGARETTE

By HYPERION LE BRESKO

A FIVE-CENT ferry ride from New York brings one to a land of mystery and romance as glamorous and thrilling as any depicted in Graustarkian movies. In Arrapagh, Staten Island, a ferry and a street-car ride from New York City, Major General Count Cherup Spiridovitch, former right-hand man to the late Czar of Russia, former head of the Russian Secret Service Police, and the "future Czar and Mussolini" of Russia has established royal Muscovite Headquarters. The General has aides-de-camp and a general staff, and their families, and a multigraph machine, and everything but money. He also has at least a million trained men under arms today in Russia, and in two years he is sure he will be Czar of Russia.

The Barrett mansion, where the Royal Russians hold forth, is owned by a Mrs. Bealey, a small, thin, dervish woman. Mrs. Bealey at one time held open house for a group of nature dancers, young art ladies who would cavort nudely on her lawn with the dawn. . . . Indian Yogis and "Fourth dimensional artists" have also enjoyed her hospitality. At present she is very busy, what with the tempestuous Russians, and an "International Center of Culture, Art and Beauty" she is forming. As she says, poets from as far as Pittsburgh have come to her meetings.

The house is a huge brown mansion on the top of a hill, dominating its surroundings like a castle. A visitor to the house is struck by the great central hall, and the balcony, which looks like a set from "The Miracle." There is a somber light filtering through, the particles of dust that come from dying wood and brick. Decayed statuary and paintings line the walls, and broken chairs are placed here and there. It is like an art cemetery.

Col. Bennett, the aide-de-camp, whose real name is something like von Antons-Doerp, greeted me at first. He needed a shave very badly, and his trousers had evidently made up their mind to leave him. He was a tall, officer-looking man, with a clean-cut face that once had been good-looking, but like the house, was now a ruin. He bummed me immediately for a cigarette.

I gave him one, and he accepted it with a courtly gesture, as if doing me a favor. Then he talked about the "life-work," a fanatical gleam in his eye.

"Yes, in two years the General will be Czar of Russia . . . When we give the word . . . pouf . . . A million trained men under arms in Russia alone . . . more ready to rise . . . Rumania, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Poland, England all with us . . . The others, France, Germany, they will have to come in . . . England, America, they will wait . . . but they too will come in . . . Of course, the great international financiers like Rothschild and the Sassoons are against us, they are really behind the Bolsheviks . . . we have

proof . . . proof . . . The Duke of Northumberland is with us . . . British royalty with us . . . Queen Marie of Rumania, who will be here soon, is with us . . . Every week thousands of couriers are in touch with us . . . You will see, you will see . . ."

He frowned. I gave him another cigarette and he looked happier. "I'll take you to the General . . ."

Up a long stairway, around a balcony, into a huge room, filled with a long table piled high with documents and pamphlets. A thin, sparse man with a hawk-like nose, and cruel narrow eyes rose from a chair, and stood stiffly at attention, as if reviewing a regiment. This was the future Czar. He apologized for his shirt-sleeves. He spoke in French. We apologized for our intrusion, but he forgave us and asked for a cigarette.

The walls were decorated with French newspaper clippings, portraits of the General in uniform, of his officer-friends in uniform, orders the General had worn, portraits of the late Czar, of the King of Yugoslavia, of Mussolini, Coolidge and Dawes.

The beautiful marble head of a strong woman weeping was in a corner of the room, next to an Ikon. She was waiting for the release of death. "Ruined Russia," was the name carved on the statue, "Ruined Russia," which these men are so confident they will rule.

They talked. Russia needed strong hands. Their hands. Russia wanted trappings, glitter, a court, gold. They would give it to Russia. Russia wanted to be free from the Mongol domination. They would free it. It was all so simple . . . They had millions of men under arms. Millions ready to come over to them when they should beat the drums of war from their ruined brick mansion in Staten Island . . . They complained that America was not with them. They could not understand that. Their cause was so obvious, so simple, so just . . . Russia, ruined by the Bolsheviks who were not really Bolsheviks, but the Mongol hordes, the Moors, the army of Attila, in a new guise. Japan plotting against America. Asia rising against America and Europe. They were fighting the White Man's Fight. They would make Russia the advance guard of the Anglo-Saxon, of the Teuton, of the American . . . and America would not help them. Pliss give me a cigarette.

Their eyes flashed as they spoke, their tongues lingered on words like *royal*, *army* and *king*, as if the expression of such words gave sensual delight to the curling red strip of flesh in their mouths that could talk, that could bring armies in the room, could slay millions, while the millions lived. "The Mongol," "A million men, trained, under arms, waiting for the call," "The next Czar," "The Mussolini of Russia," "international bankers," "British royalty," "Queen Marie of Rumania . . ." A cigarette.

Like gilded balls between jugglers, the grandiose phrases were tossed back and forth. Their talk was a purple cloud in which they lived a beautiful

romantic dream. The reality of rags and squalor, the smell of burnt beef stew wafted into the royal chamber, the ignoble squalling of noble ragged brats from the rooms upstairs, the babble of excited Russian resounding all over the house like a barroom fight, all faded away. The dream-world of "Army Orders," duly signed and counter-signed, of "International Plotting," of revolution, of "Rulers of the World," of saviors of civilization, this alone was real. Their fingers writhed like restless snakes, as they spoke their eyes gleamed like bayonets, hungry to lunge into the throats of their enemies.

The interview was over. The general bowed. I bowed. The aide-de-camp bowed. I bowed. The major-domo, Colonel Doerp, escorted me outside. We sat down and talked again.

The aide-de-camp of the general hurried out after me.

"Major General Count Cherup Spiridovitch wishes to tell you that he is willing to exchange the Queenship of Russia for American millions."

He bowed. I bowed.

The major-domo took some cigarettes and left me, haughtily hitching his pants up as he went.

An "orderly" ran up to me in the hall. He informed me that a mass of "nobility" would come tomorrow for a ball they were holding, sympathizers from New York and New Jersey, Russians. Would I come too? I gave him several cigarettes. He took them, smiled and left.

On the wall I saw an important-looking document, typed in red in Russian, with the major-domo's imposing title and names, and someone else's counter-signature. I stole it for my newspaper and had it translated, later.



DRAWING BY I. KLEIN

THE NOVEMBER SMOKE SCREEN





DRAWING BY I. KLEIN

## THE NOVEMBER SMOKE SCREEN

It was an order calling on the nobility to throw their garbage out more carefully.

The Colonel ran out after me . . .  
"Don't forget," he panted into my

ears, "a million men are under arms," and asked for a few more cigarettes. But I hadn't any left. I hope the future Czar had other visitors that day, who were cigarette smokers, too.



DRAWING BY FRANZ HEINZ

AMERICAN CITIZENS

## THREE FABLES

By CHARLES GARLAND

I

I was waiting one time in the office of a justice of the peace when a man came in and addressed himself to the magistrate, saying, "I wish to get a marriage license, three birth certificates, a death certificate, a second marriage license and four dog licenses—two for two dogs that are living and two for two dogs that are dead but that were living at the beginning of the current year."

"How is it that you come for all these things at once?" asked the lawyer. "These things are usually obtained as the need arises and not, as is evidently the case with you, when the proper time has already passed."

"This is due," said the applicant, "to a certain philosophy which I have held. I have been what might be called a Christian Anarchist and have hereto performed all my duties to God, believing that I should serve him only. When people have asked me if I was married I have told them that I was, and I have justified this answer to myself by a spiritual interpretation, meaning that the loved one and I were married in spirit by the love we held for each other and that our marriage had been blessed by God in the bonny bright children he gave us. Thus I have answered all questions that have been asked me and I have always been held in high regard by my neighbours and have been considered an honest man.

"But I talked lately with a preacher and he has taught me to fear. He has shown me a place in the gospel where we are enjoined to render to Caesar the things that are Caesars and he has interpreted this to mean that we should obey our governors and do as they tell us without asking ourselves whether their orders are pleasing to God. He has warned me also that I was violating the laws of the land and that I was liable to arrest. I have striven in vain to harmonize these things which he told me to my old beliefs, for I have learned to see that I can not serve God and Caesar at once, any more than a weather vane can point to two winds at the same time. Thus at last I have come to abandon my old beliefs and to abandon my God. Indeed, I might say that I have come to worship a new god and that you are his priest, that your desk is his altar and that the sum which you ask of me shall be my first sacrifice to my new deity."

II

A great peace had settled on the world and I was alone with my soul.

"Who art thou, my soul?" I asked. And she replied, "I am the answerer of questions."

"Why is not everything answered?" I asked again, "and why is man left in doubt?"

"Why is it better for chickens to scratch for their food?" she replied.

"Is that it?" I asked. And she said, "That's it."

And still I questioned her, "Why must a man suffer these doubts and fears? and who is the evil one who has inflicted such disease upon the bodies and minds of men? for death and destruction reign supreme and man and woman are forever worsted."

"Once long ago," said my soul, "when you were a little boy we were walking together through the forest. And I, as your mother, was holding your hand. As we walked along through the speckled shade of the trees where the shadows were chasing the sunspots as the leaves rustled overhead, you pointed to this and to that, asking me why and how this was so. And I told you of the secrets that lay hid in each seed and how a seed unfolded into a tree.

"We came to a great oak spreading its branches far out on every side. At the foot of the oak was a large wooden chest, bound by strong iron bands and locked with two padlocks.

"You asked me what that was and I told you that the chest contained evil.

"What is evil?" you asked, and I told you that it was belief in destruction and defeat.

"Defeat?" you exclaimed, "what is defeat?"

"So long as the chest is locked," I said, "you will never know, for words cannot tell."

"Open it," you demanded. Then I told you what terrible things fear and hate were and how they turned all things sour. But you could not understand.

"Open it," you demanded a second time.

"But I cautioned you again, telling you how evil would harden your heart and make you blind to beauty and goodness.

"Would it really hurt me if you opened the chest?" you asked.

"It would surround you by doubts and fears," I said, "and you would think yourself lost. You would be alone and lose all love for me. You would fall and rise and fall again until finally you would understand evil and master it."

"Could I master it?" you asked.

"You could," I said, "but it would take a long, long time—so long that you would believe you could not endure. Again and again you would surrender. You would declare yourself too weak and cower before the strength of deception. Finally you would rise in your strength and master it."

"After I had told you all this, 'It is for you to decide,' I said, 'the chest is yours to be opened or to stay closed, but think well before you speak.'

"I want to master it," you said, and I unlocked the padlocks."

III

I stopped at a house to inquire the way. Inside I found an old married couple and their grown up daughter. The man told me which road to take. As I was going out I paused on the doorstep. Inside I heard the man say: "He looked like a good man. I wish I had offered him something to eat." The wife said, "I will watch as he goes out to see that he does not steal some of our chickens." And the daughter said, "He looks like the minister's son, who, they say, leads a riotous life." I went in as one. They received me as three.

## TWO PORTRAITS

A Niece of the Old Lady from Dubuque

The nine cat-lives her grandmother spent  
In planting corn and feeding men  
And bearing children, eight or ten,  
Are all distilled and smoothly blent  
In those twin lakes, her eyes, where gleams  
Desire as huge and resolute as the march  
Of glaciers, and as cold. It seems  
Two husbands foundered in those eyes without  
A trace, or even a warning shout.  
She scribbles verses, is a little arch. . .  
Perhaps a Bluebeard made of steel  
Could mate this woman, make her feel  
Some pity for the fond and credulous hearts  
Of frail men—and spare the arts.

### Another Niece

Elizabeth thinks Helen is a creature. . . .  
Well, I suppose one feature  
Of her dislike is, Helen's pleasure  
Exceeds all dignity and measure.  
For Bessie, an occasional libation  
Always in careful moderation  
Is quite enough, and never more than this:  
A walk, a talk, a parting kiss  
With certain pale defeated swains  
Who scarcely understand their pains.  
Even in High School, Bessie had a will  
And now, at thirty, has it still.  
So much for Bessie; when I tried  
To tell this to a certain grave  
Chief of the proud Pueblos, he would have  
None of it; first he said I lied;  
Then, more politely, said I mocked.  
At last, believing, he was shocked.

James Rorty





DRAWING BY FRANZ HEINZ

AMERICAN CITIZENS



DRAWING BY FRANZ HEINZ

AMERICAN CITIZENS



## OFF WITH THE BLACK-FACE!

*The Weary Blues*, by Langston Hughes. Alfred Knopf, New York. \$2.00.

Creatively, New York is not much better than an ache and an appetite. It is the monstrous overgrown belly-plexus of a monstrous, overgrown competitive civilization. It doesn't make anything except money and its greed is enormous. It must live, it says, although of course it would be much better to have an earthquake up-end the whole idiot's carnival and let the healed earth go quietly back to sumach and timothy.

But New York must live and its wants are multitude. It wants girls—not the worn and jaded local product, but fresh and shapely beauties from the provinces; Mr. Florenz Ziegfeld caters astutely to this need. It wants rustics, eccentrics, lumberjacks, cowboys,—James Stevens, Will Rogers. It wants art—and the writers and painters and sculptors of a continent pour their hoarded gains of life and desire, thought and feeling, into the dry veins of the metropolis. It wants pottery from Czecho-Slovakia, hooked rugs from New England, idols from Africa, cults from India. New York will pay, liberally, and in cash, the only currency it recognizes.

New York is liberal, sophisticated, enlightened. New York draws no color line. It wants the Negro. It wants his dark uncorrupted flesh. It wants his jazz, his songs. It wants his laughter—New York's lips are split with its own wise-cracks. Despite the subways, the elevated trains, the rushing traffic, there is a terrible silence in New York, a white, death-house silence that aches to be filled.

Well, for five or six years now, New York has had the Negro. The black tides have poured north into Harlem. The black jazzers and singers are stars on Broadway. The sharp Jews and Nordics who run the cabarets have found a new decoy—painted black—and how it does pay! The black poets are published by the best publishers. The Negro renaissance. Carl Van Vechten has told us all about it, and New York is amused.

But how about the Negro in all this? I, for one, am sick of black-face comedians, whether high-brow or low-

brow. I am sick of the manumitted slave psychology and I should think the Negroes themselves would be twice as sick. I, for one, am waiting and hoping for a new titillation. I want the Negroes to stop entertaining the whites and begin to speak for themselves. I am waiting for a Negro poet to stand up and say "I—I am *not* amused."

Langston Hughes doesn't say anything like this. Nothing as bitter, nothing as masterful, nothing as savage. Why not? Why do the Negroes express so little beyond this black-white relation? Why don't they speak forthrightly as free, untamed *human beings*. Are Negroes really savages? One hopes so, but one doubts. So many of them look, talk and write like sophisticated, tamed, adapted, behavioristic white men, and if that is what they want to be, it is nothing in the way of an aspiration.

Nevertheless, Hughes is a poet, with a curiously firm and supple style, half naive and half sophisticated, which is on the whole more convincing than anything which has yet appeared in Negro poetry. Here and there in the volume there are pieces startling in their effectiveness.

### WHEN SUE WEARS RED

When Susanna Jones wear red  
Her face is like an ancient cameo  
Turned brown by the ages.  
Come with a blast of trumpets, Jesus!  
When Susanna Jones wear red  
A queen from some time-dead Egyptian  
night  
Walks once again.  
Blow trumpets, Jesus!  
And the beauty of Susanna Jones in red  
Burns in my heart a love-fire sharp like  
pain.  
Sweet silver trumpets,  
Jesus!

There are others the effect of which is much less pleasing. For example:

All the tom-toms of the jungle beat in  
my blood.  
And all the wild hot moons of the jungles  
shine in my soul.  
I am afraid of this civilization—  
So hard,  
So strong,  
So cold.

I hope and trust Hughes doesn't mean this. If he does, I'd rather have Garvey, who may not be intelligent, but who at least seems more angry than afraid.

James Rorty.

## THE TIRED SOPHISTICATE

*Nightshade, Confessions of a Reasoning Animal*, Anonymous. E. P. Dutton & Company. \$2.00.

Here are the intimate confessions of a young lawyer in a small Eastern town called appropriately Styxtown, a "city of lost souls." He has a dusty old office and very little practice. He considers himself dangerous although you never find out just why. He is excessively fond of young high-school girls. He flirts with two in particular, one naive and pure, the other, like himself, corrupt and "dangerous." He dwells at great length on his kisses. They go to basketball games together. Sometimes the home team wins and

sometimes it loses. Sometimes he talks to people about town. He listens to the gutter talk of Susie Gettner, who brought up her daughter to be chaste and well-bred. He hangs about with the boozers in Terry's saloon. He patronizes Oscar, the restaurant keeper. He has apparently a real sympathy for the underdog.

At other times he walks up and down his office, "my brain floating loose in my head, my tongue parched, laughing madly at my wasted life . . . at the way I have allowed my wonderful mind to go to seed in this stagnant backwater of so-called civilization, at all my poet's love I have lavished on

Lucille who understands nothing—I laughed at everything, and God, what a relief it was!" People are kind to him. They pity him because "my soul stands so far away from them, so mournfully and irrevocably alone." Nothing ever happens. What can ever happen in Styxtown? What is left but self-pitying dreams or cynical nonchalance? In the end "Aphrodite," the "dangerous" girl, decides to marry him because he "needs a mother." "I wish I could believe in her love," he concludes. "I need badly to believe in something."

All this is told in a style as soft and homespun as a Hoosier drawl. Occasionally the author warms up to a rich poetic glow. Before the implacable despair written on some pages you can only stand with a dumb and helpless pity. Here and there are sprinkled such bits of terse wisdom as "For love, sorrow, pain, despair, gaiety, passion, we (Americans) have only one gesture—the joke."

But when you have laid the book aside, you feel that it is important for only one reason. It exposes in a terrible way what is happening to the sophisticated liberal in the small American community. Except as a spectator with a faltering pose of broken-hearted amusement, he has cut himself off from all contact with the life of the people. He has turned into himself. His powers of action have become atrophied. An incurable introvert, he spends his days worrying about himself, pitying

himself, fearful of what others may think about him, ripping himself to pieces and mauling the wreckage over with masochistic voluptuousness.

When he looks at the external world at all, he sees life only as a cracked, grimy, unintelligible picture. He hears only the sardonic laughter that comes from the other side of despair. In his nose is the smell of decay and death. He is neurotic, perverse, diseased. Through this defective instrument all life seems futile, "a maggotty thing." All civilization seems to be willing. He feels that he is a poet in a prosy world, a "reasoning animal" among barbarians. To prove himself a poet he spreads his weariness over 300 pages. To prove himself a reasoning animal he dips from cynicism into sentimentality and from sentimentality into a lust so morbid and sultry as to seem unnatural.

In short, here is a perfect picture of the tired sophisticate. If he could forget for a while that he is a poet and a reasoning animal, if he could only tear himself away from the contemplation of his own misery, he might find closer to the soil, in the fields and in the factories, a life more primitive and hopeful. But this he cannot do. He, as well as the civilization which has rendered him impotent, has gone his full length. Both are strangling themselves on their own tethers. Wearily they wait for death.

Harbor Allen.

## THE AMERICAN SOCIAL SCENE

*Social Progress, A Handbook of the Liberal Movement. The Arbitrator*, 114 East 31st Street, New York. \$2.00.

Upon the liberal and radical weeklies of England and the United States—such weeklies, for instance, as the *New York Nation* and its London counterpart—a function has devolved within recent years, which was not contemplated in their original scheme of usefulness: they are now the only *intelligible* newspapers, with a nascent revolutionary press for a supplement and corrective. It must be patent to every intelligent observer that the great bourgeois dailies of England and America—even the best of them—are not only *misleading* in their partisan account of causes, motives and perspectives of world-affairs, but that they are getting less and less *intelligible* with every succeeding month to the general run of their readers. Since the Armistice in November, 1918, the pace of history has become so rapid, its sweep so all-inclusive, its steps so catastrophic, that almost every issue of any technically great newspaper represents a frightful jumble of incoherencies, that would be important if they were coherent in the minds of the readers—a jumble resembling a film play overlaid with wondrous incident, sprawling over five continents, and reeled off so rapidly as to utterly appal and confound the beholder. These tangled incidents of contemporary history, stretching all the way from France to China and Japan and brought forward in jerky frag-

ments by the daily press, are straightened out and rendered halfways intelligible by our liberal and bourgeois radical weeklies—an important service by no means undone and set at naught by their helpless comment upon current affairs.

Under the circumstances the appearance of a briefly worded, inexpensive, and—on the whole—reliable encyclopedia of American social dynamics is an event to be hailed with joy. *The Arbitrator* has done a genuine service to the entire community of radical reconstructionists by commissioning William Floyd to compile such a handbook, with the assistance of Solon De Leon, Bolton Hall, John Haynes Holmes, Frederic C. Howe, Jessie Wallace Hughan, James H. Maurer, Scott Nearing, Louis F. Post, Upton Sinclair, and two or three others. The volume is confined to 342 well-typed pages. It is divided into two parts: Part I, Causes of Discontent. Chapter I—The Profit System. Chapter II—The Industrial Struggle. Chapter III—Oppression by Government. Chapter IV—Attempted Reforms. Chapter V—Class Distinctions. Chapter VI—War Breeds Injustice. Part II, The Liberal Movement. Chapter I—Definitions and Articlettes. Chapter II—Organizations. Chapter III—Political Parties. Chapter IV—Library for Liberals (a brief Bibliography of Social Theories and Movements). Appended to these two parts is a Roster of Liberal and Labor Periodicals, and an Index. Now, for the first time, it

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may be looked up—meaning, that fact of American social history, whichever it may be, which is brought forward in conversation among radicals, without the possibility, until now, of exact verification. Against the book and the

**THE CHEAPEST BOOK I  
EVER READ**

*The Torrents of Spring*, by Ernest Hemingway. Charles Scribner & Sons. \$1.50.

This is the cheapest book I have ever read. The fact that Mr. Hemingway meant it to be cheap doesn't make it funny. Or readable. Life has been good to Mr. Hemingway. He has received the Croce di Guerra, the Medaglia d'Argento, the Valore Militaire from the Italian Government for services rendered during the war. In which Mr. Hemingway was assisted by a number of Italian citizens. It is not from Mr. Hemingway that we learn about the assistance he received from the number of Italian citizens. Mr. Hemingway once had a friend named Sherwood Anderson. Sherwood Anderson at one time gave Ernest Hemingway a letter to the world recommending him as a young man with a flair for literature. Since he did not at the same time say that Ernest Hemingway was a good friend and a good writer of satire, Sherwood Anderson still remains the unsatirized hero of *The Torrents of Spring*, and Mr. Hemingway his own satirist.

I have a special anger for the man who can write a book like *In Our Time* and who can write stories like *Big Two-Hearted River* and *The Undeveloped*, both of which I published for the first time, and in so doing record himself as being aware of and close enough to himself to acknowledge his own nature when he faces it. Because there is then no such excuse as stupidity or innocence for such a book as *The Torrents of Spring*.

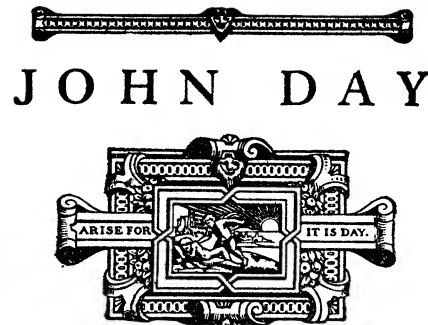
Shortly after Sherwood Anderson wrote a story called "I'm a Fool" Ernest Hemingway read a story called "I'm a Fool" and shortly after that Ernest Hemingway wrote a story called "My Old Man" which Robert McAlmon published and made no money out of publishing but for which Mr. Hemingway received another honor. Edward J. O'Brien dedicated his Year Book of The American Short Story to Ernest Hemingway and republished in his Best Short Stories of 1924 this story, "My Old Man." The best friend Ernest Hemingway ever had was Ford Madox Ford who in his monthly magazine *The Transatlantic Review*, published Hemingway's stories when no one else in God's world would. Mr. Hemingway was then twenty-seven years old and even at that time everybody knew he was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and wounded on the Italian front. We now learn from reading *The Torrents of Spring* that Mr. Ford Madox Ford for having written "the best writer in America at this moment (though for the moment he happens to be in Paris), the most conscientious, the most master of his craft, the most consummate, is Ernest Hemingway" is a horse's fumdum, and Sherwood Anderson, who has been equally

enthusiastic, is a horse's hoodepee. If we read *The Torrents of Spring* from page 1 to page 143 we learn that Mr. Dos Passos and Mr. Scott Fitzgerald are among the highly-paid friends of Mr. Hemingway. We also learn that the reader who pays a dollar and a half to hear Mr. Hemingway say throughout the one hundred and forty three pages in a heavy sweaty voice "go to hell but don't take the dollar and a half with you" is a damn fool for reading the book.

The noblest minds have the gift of satire. Mr. Hemingway has been facetious about two gentlemen who have been his friends. Sherwood Anderson is a great writer. Ford Madox Ford is a great editor. Not even so praised a writer as Ernest Hemingway can make those two facts comic or ridiculous. Not even Ernest Hemingway himself, who permits quotations of Henry Fielding to appear throughout this book and who permits the book to be described as being written by Ernest Hemingway, author of *In Our Time*, can make this book comic or ridiculous. It is cheaply tragic. The sub-title is "A Romantic Novel in Honor of the Passing of a Great Race," which, if it refers to Mr. Hemingway's race for literary honors, is quite true.

There is a theory abroad in some quarters that a man can write a bad book to make money and then use the money to buy leisure in which to write a good book. This theory is a vicious theory because it is not leisure that makes men write good books but character, and men of character do not deliberately write bad books. To write a bad book because one needs money is to do so because one wants money and it does not make the book less contemptible. The only justification for a bad book is that the author could not write a good one. It is an impudence for a writer to believe that because he has written a good book he can turn around and write a bad book and remain a good writer. Mr. Hemingway has written one good book but it is not good enough to salt down *The Torrents of Spring*. The first principle of humor is a sense of the ridiculous and a generous and a gentle heart. The first principle of satire is a quick sensitive mind which few but the Irish have. One is not being satirical when one is having a heavy sneer at the humanity in others. One is satirical when one ridicules the inhumanity in others and shows one's detestation of that cruelty in man which arises from possessing no sense of humor. The mind of Ernest Hemingway acts too slowly to write satire. A good straight attack on Sherwood Anderson or Ford Madox Ford would be interesting. Anger is rare in these days of young ambitious writers with careers to make and not enough talent to make them on talent alone.

Ernest Walsh.



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## LOVE AND THE REVOLUTION

*Love in Greenwich Village*, by Floyd Dell. George H. Doran Co. \$2.00.

The revolt of the artist has switched from the neuroticism of the nineties to the eroticism of the twenties. While the poets who celebrated the revolutionary changes of 1789, for the time at least, were rebels in social and political life, the advertised literary radicals of today are revolutionary chiefly in sex. The social enthusiasm that inspired Cowper to write of the French Revolution as "a wonderful period in the history of mankind," and Burns in his beautifully dynamic way to send guns from a captured smuggling vessel to the Convention of Paris, is absent from the lives and works of our literary rebels.

Our radicals do not don red caps like William Blake, denounce the political reactionaries, and dedicate themselves to revolution. They write love-lyrics instead in new patterns, pen *Run-away* novels to titillate the bourgeoisie, or evade the realities of the social struggle in studies of *The Pilgrimage of Henry James* or the antique beauty of *Virgin Spain*.

Yet our day is a more memorable one than that which inspired Burns and Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth and Cowper. The French Revolution gave birth to modern capitalism. We are living, however, in the days of the Russian Revolution, with a new and greater world order already palpitating with reality. But our poets are unmoved by this. They quietly fashion images in the tranquillity of their gardens and fugitive retreats, or in their attics orgiastically twist passions into new figures and forms.

Floyd Dell is a vivid example of the inadequacy and failure of our literary radicals. While we do not expect revolutionary expression in the superfetations of a Maxwell Bodenheim or a Carl Van Vechten, we do anticipate things daring and radical in a Dell. Dell was a signal figure in the galaxy of literary radicals that made up *The Masses* and *The Liberator* a few years ago. He should be a figure in the movement of literary radicals today. But he is not. Instead of battling for a revolutionary art, he has devoted himself to the trifling pastime of writing sexy novels for adolescent Menckeniens and jaded bourgeoisie. He has forgotten his tradition. His retreat is not a literary N. E. P., but a break with fundamentals. He has been deceived by the erotic revolt. His novels are devoted to sex rebellion instead of the social revolution, which includes all the lesser revolts.

In his recent book, *Love in Greenwich Village*, Floyd Dell has again re-

vealed his affection for an existence that he has now deserted in his life but not in his novels. Circumstances have driven him from vagabondage to virtue, but his novels still live in the past. In *Love in Greenwich Village*, Dell presents with reminiscent richness the revolt of the youth of yesterday, the Greenwich Village that little more than a decade ago was effervescent with life, love and spontaneity. There was in the attitude of those vanished Villagers something of a "miraculous naïvete," writes Dell, "a late Victorian credulousness, a faith, happy and absurd, in the goodness and beauty of this chaotic universe." And it is because in this book he has captured some of this spirit of abandon, this idealization of "beauty" as a way of life, that *Love in Greenwich Village*, despite its over-romantic substance, has some appeal. The stories in the volume that tell of the Rise and Fall of Greenwich Village, The Gifts of the Fourth Goddess, and the Kitten and the Masterpiece are delicate, fragmentary things, exquisitely chiseled vignettes. They reflect the precious indolence and charming inconsequentiality of that life which has now tapered down into dullness and affectation.

The story and fate of Greenwich Village is the story and fate of too many literary radicals. These young insurgents visualize love as life, instead of as a phase of life that is conditioned and changed by economic circumstance. They are playboys, some of them as sickening as cretins. Sex-freedom gives them a sense of security which they do not realize is deceptive. They do not see that the bourgeoisie cannot be defied by a phrase, ignored by a gesture. The freedom of any Greenwich Village is, after all, a spurious freedom. The very source of its income is from the bourgeoisie. The existence of its world in any bourgeois society is exceedingly precarious and dubious. It can always be "bought out" or "bought up" as has happened with Greenwich Village after the realtors arrived.

No, the true artist's dream is not to be realized in Greenwich Villages, but in a new society that will make love as free as imagination, as serene as intelligence. Floyd Dell is no neophyte. His studies in Literature and The Machine Age, now embodied in his book *Intellectual Vagabondage*, reveal his intimacy with the economic background of art. Yet he is now sacrificing his economics to sex-playboying. He seems to be on the path by which, in America, our literary radicals reach ineffectuality, sterility, and a place in Who's Who. V. F. Calverton.



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## THOSE TERRIBLE AMERICANS

(Continued from page 19)

eggs and a bag of flour, they grimly waylaid the women they had a particular grudge against. While Minnie Thomas pelted them with eggs, Miss Elvira plastered them with flour. The results exceeded their most hopeful dreams. And still they never missed prayer meeting. It was there that their inspirations came to them.

The Wednesday that saw the victorious settling of the strike, Sis Jenkins was absent from prayer meeting. Strangely Miss Lucretia was also missing. Her anxious friends found her waiting at the Church gate. "I was detained on important business," she explained mysteriously, "I've been arrested. I am out on bail. The war-

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rant said assault and battery. All I did was to knock off Sis Jenkins' hat, and to slur Minnie Rapp. It was my last chance before we go back to work. I am not sorry. And I'm through with Bible class and prayer meeting and going to church only at night because my clothes are too shabby and old for the rich ones who go in the morning. And I've washed the last of their cup

towels and the last of their dishes for their pie socials. It's all we have ever been good enough to do. I am proud of being arrested. I shall never be sorry about anything. I'll prove it . . . "See" . . . in a triumphant whisper, "I've been and bought myself some bloomers like our organizer and I am going back to work without a single petticoat."

## CEMENT PLANT

(Continued from page 19)

tell me quick because I'm going to put this plug right back in again.

We lived at the Y. M. C. A. Way up on the top floor for us bullies. Nice washroom. But it didn't mean a thing because water would just turn into concrete. The way we got clean was we took the towels and dusted ourselves off. Wonder what those Y-birds thought of us. You know how it is when a gang of bridge-men live together—it ain't nice. Crap shooting all Sunday. Shoot a dollar. Coming out for six-bits. A dollar says you're a god damn fool. Bones be good to me. One night there's an old bird at the foot of the stairs listening. He was one of those guys that voted for prohibition—not once, but twice,—so it would be sure to count. He registered for a room at the Y. M. C. A. the day they laid the cornerstone. You know it hurts those birds, inside, if they hear a little profanity. So I says to another guy, give us a drink out of that god damn bottle. We didn't have no bottle. Only I wanted that old stiff to know both his votes was wasted. Next day he asked weren't we afraid to lose our happy home at the Y? I snickered.

It was cold up there too. Snow-drifts nine feet high. Couple of us got into them with low shoes on. The natives ask us where we came from. Down South, we told them. Hell, man, where we was yesterday they were cutting asparagus.

Stayed there nine days. That was two weeks too long already. The sheriff, and the town clerk hated to see us go. The town would get dead again. But we couldn't breathe any more. Our lungs must have been concrete. Yea—those cement plants are some job. One will last a life time. See that scar there? Got it on that job. Was out on top of a column waiting to make a connection. The beam rolled over one of those cement clouds. Couldn't see the load. They boomed out and pinched my arm between the column and the load. The cement got into the cut, and the Doc pours iodine in there. Boy, when that iodine hit! The air was full of pile-drivers and dynamite. You go on that cement job buddy. Me, I'm going to stay right here, and jump a derrick three times a week. It's all work. But here you can see what you're doing anyways.

## WEISBORD'S FAREWELL TO PASSAIC

(Continued from page 21)

eration of Labor and to victory over the mill bosses, I gladly pledged myself to do so. I am here tonight to carry out that pledge.

"As you are aware, when I came among you to organize you, I had no thought of organizing MY union. I knew it would have been insanity to organize an independent union. From the very beginning it was my aim to get you into the main body of the American labor movement, and in this connection we made several overtures to the United Textile Workers of America, but the U. T. W. was not ready at that time to take us in. Now that you have gained admission into the U. T. W. we can celebrate the realization of your first objective.

"That I am going away is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign of strength that I am able to leave you, satisfied that you are now powerful enough, that you have wise and trained leaders who have come up from your

ranks, to assure the protection of your every interest."

Then Weisbord shouted: "Build your union! Build your union! Build your union!"

He is like flame in the darkness. He is the burning core of this crowd of people whom he has organized into an eager, militant army. Do the mill owners ever see their crowds, one wonders? Have any of those who make the mill's policies looked at their crowds? Look down in the faces of the strikers who have come to say good-bye to Albert Weisbord, their strike leader, and to their friend Gurley Flynn.

There is a sense of well being, a luminous quality to this crowd that sweeps over the consciousness of all people who see them. They will not forget Weisbord. They are a mass. They are hope and courage. They are the future. They will win.

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## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS RETOLD

(Continued from page 17)



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What price environment? Behaviorism has a more hopeful answer than the Second Commandment, and even Right Wing psychology, with its Kallikaks and its theory of inheritance, does not so utterly damn the fourth generation.

The Third Commandment—“Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain”—was written for a people who had not developed beyond the psychology of school-boys. “Don’t make faces at teacher” is its modern equivalent.

For the Fourth, let’s say, as the propertied classes do,—“Observe the week-end, to keep it holiday.” Militant labor is demanding, and winning a forty hour week. Two days already—why not eventually three. Moses had not counted on machinery and quantity production.

Number five—“Honor thy Father and thy Mother” echoes with emptiness. Why should parents be in a different category from other people in this question of honor? Honor only to whom honor is due, regardless of relationship. If your father is a bum, tell him so; he, standing as control for so many years, had more chance to deserve honor from you than had any one else. If he has failed, love him, if you can, but don’t in dishonesty try to honor him.

And anyway, why should the responsibility for this difficult parent-child adjustment, with its delicate easily-upset balance, rest on the younger, presumably less wise and tolerant party? Let’s change it to read:

“Hands off the younger generation!”

“Thou shalt not kill,”—or as some versions of the Bible give it even more crudely—“Thou shalt not murder,” is far too narrow. Let us make that read, “There shall be no taking of life, even by capital punishment or by wars of defense.” Then out of it we may develop some philosophy of pacifism and co-operation—an intention never put there by the ancient scrap loving Hebrews, primarily a fighting clan.

Of all the Ten Commandments the Seventh is probably today the most advertised, the most violated, and the least scientifically approached!

“Neither shalt thou commit adultery.”

This is a poser! Some learned doctors have proposed that we are biologically polygamous and polyandrous, and will therefore always have adultery with us. A changing morality must at any rate come to an honest evaluation of it soon. The problem involves such little things as the marriage relation, the question of equality and freedom of the sexes, independence of women, the value of the family as basic in society and the protection of children. Have at it, you debaters!

The Eighth Commandment ties up with the whole broad fling of the co-operative movement. “Neither shalt thou steal” is entirely inadequate as a precept for group-living. Merely not to take your neighbor’s property is no sort of civilization at all. In modern highly organized community life, to augment and aid our neighbor’s belongings is the only safe way to protect and build up our own. The new order will advise *public* rather than private ownership of most possessions. And of course in the 20th Century, *neighbor* is an elastic word—it must mean not only the man next door who sends his clothes to the same co-operative laundry, but England across the ocean who sits at the World Court with us.

Number Nine raises a nice question of jurisprudence. “Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor.” This is a half-hearted legalistic precept. False-witness? Surely not. But how about bearing *full* witness? Instead of merely refraining from harming our neighbor, what if we help him by an affirmative act or word? What if lawyers, instead of matching wits, instead of excluding evidence that might hurt their clients and including everything, relevant or not, that might help, cared about the truth behind a brief? Might we not see justice as we have never yet seen it in our Courts? Russia is trying something very like that today.

For the Tenth Commandment we want to substitute something about this topsy-turvy question of compensation. Reward, it seems to us, ought to be in direct ratio to the service performed by the individual for his community. If you are paid more than your service is worth to society, that is stealing. The advertising agent or the realtor, producing nothing and growing rich, steal from the school teacher and the worker in the worsted mills, who serve well and receive little.

Here’s a rough draft of how a modern Moses might rewrite the Commandments:

1. Thou shalt be tolerant toward every man’s idea of god and good.
  2. Thou shalt free the next generation from the jeopardy of ancestral tradition.
  3. Thou shalt remember that nothing is sacred which cannot be proved true.
  4. Observe the short working-day and the long week-end.
  5. Honor thy children that they shall not dishonor thee.
  6. Thou shalt preserve life, even to the abolition of war and of capital punishment.
  7. \* \* \* \* \*
  8. Thou shalt be paid according to thy service to the community.
  9. Thou shalt bear full witness to the truth.
  10. Thou shalt covet thy neighbor’s spiritual assets, not his ass.
- By-law: Thou shalt make the table of thy commandments amendable with the amending times.

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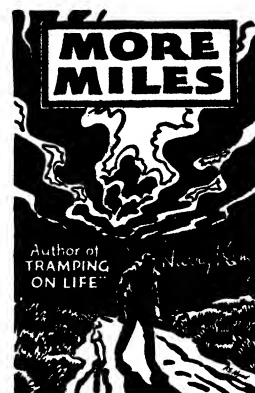
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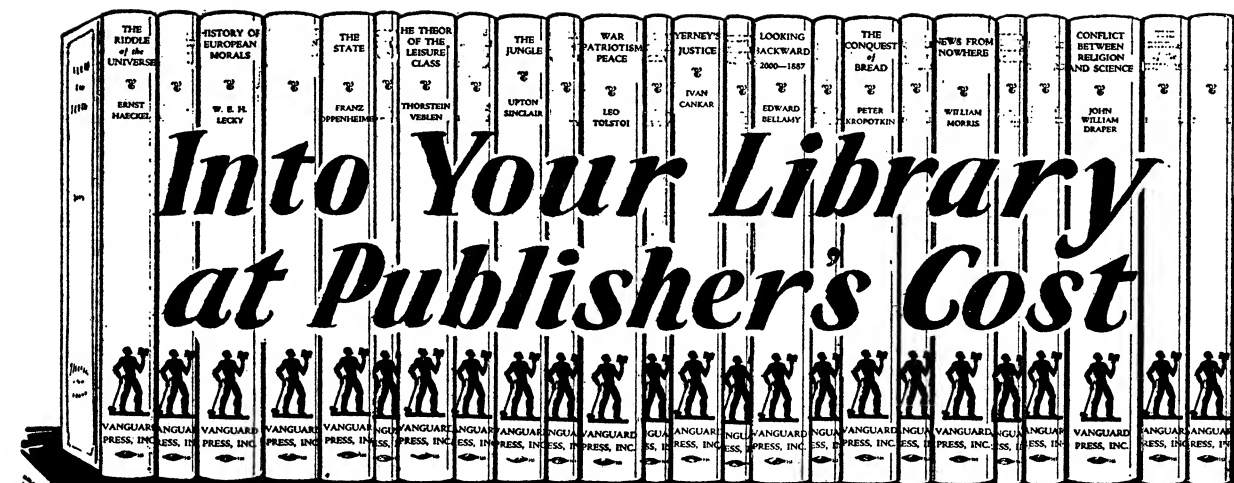
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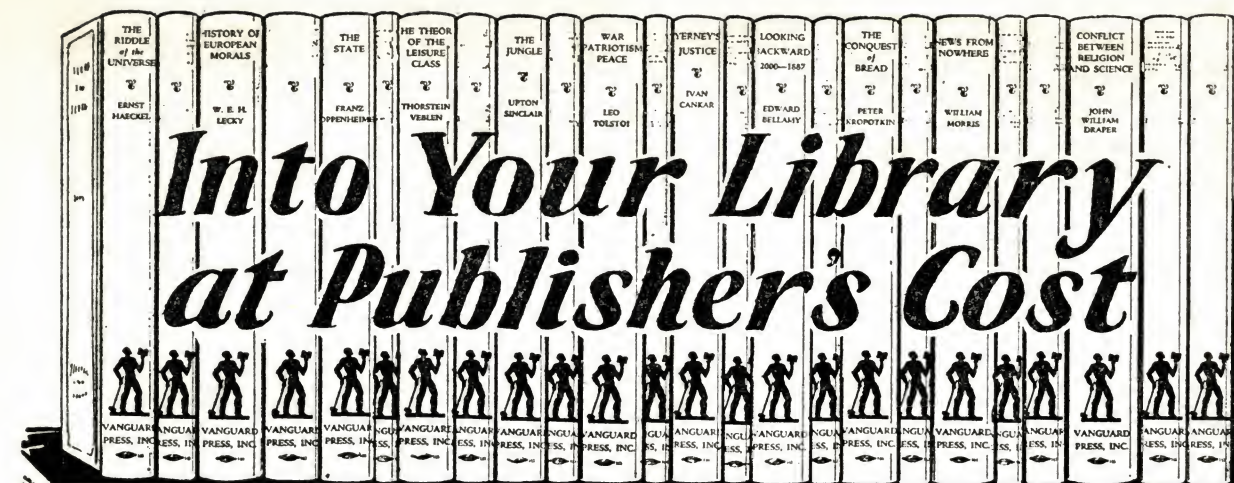
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